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PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Editorial: U.S. Responsible for Talks 'Failure'
93AE0082A London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
30 Oct 92 p 1

[Text] Contrary to expectations of many in Palestinian circles, no progress was achieved in the seventh round of bilateral negotiations, which have just ended. The Palestinians thought that a proposal for a settlement would be ready for signature during this round. They also thought that if such a proposal had been signed, it would have given President Bush a political achievement that he could have used to improve his chances of winning a second presidential term in the elections that are scheduled for this coming Tuesday.

The reason for the failure of this round and previous rounds was not only Israel's successful strategy of gaining time, but also, in spite of pressures from Arabs, Americans, and Israelis, the Palestinian negotiators insistence that the legitimate international resolutions be followed and Palestinian rights preserved.

The Palestinian people have not made all these sacrifices only to gain a shaky autonomous rule and to abandon both Jerusalem, and the complete dominance over their native soil. Had they been seeking only partial solutions, there would not have been so many rounds of talks, nor would the negotiations have lasted so long.

It is not true that the Palestinian people have no alternative. It also is not true that this submitted settlement provides them with an excellent opportunity that may not be repeated. The Palestinian people, supported by their honorable brethren, practice these alternatives each day in the occupied territories, through the flaring uprising, resulting daily in tens of people being killed, wounded, or detained. Those who speak about the Palestinian people's suffering and claim their eagerness to end it have never endured any suffering in their whole lives.

Peace negotiations, which started a year ago, have so far failed to produce any results. The United States is held directly responsible for this failure. It has imposed unjust conditions on the Palestinian people and their leaders. These conditions were in utter contradiction with the U.S.'s obligations that were presented in the guarantee paper. Therefore, the United States has to bear this responsibility and not lay it on the oppressed party, which has not missed any opportunity to emphasize its good will.

The postponement of negotiations until the American elections are over gives all Arab negotiators, and particularly the Palestinians, an opportunity to reevaluate the peace process. It does not seem logical that after a whole year of negotiations the Arabs would fail to stop the Israelis from building settlements in the occupied territories, would fail to get out the word "withdrawal" from the mouths of Israeli negotiating delegates, and even

would fail to obtain the release of more than 10,000 administrative detainees from occupation prisons.

While in the process of reviewing, we must give more attention to a bright picture, that of the Palestinian democracy, which was demonstrated by the central committee during its last meeting in Tunisia. Opposing the settlement with its present conditions, which everybody considers unfair, should not be regarded as a sin. Criticizing the way some issues were handled is not blasphemy. Those who demanded adhering to the legitimate international resolutions and who stood firmly behind this demand were the same people who strongly opposed them in the past. In both cases, this group's stand was derived from their eagerness to safeguard the Palestinian people's interests, and improve the settlement conditions. Members of the negotiating team are currently struggling for the same goal. Both democracy and the respect for others' viewpoints, if these are constructive and responsible, are the basis for our national unity.

Israel tried to impose the Madrid formula on the Palestinian people, with the aim of keeping away the PLO. However, the PLO did not let that happen. In fact, it imposed itself on everyone and managed to let the negotiating team members be presented at all of the PLO national organizations, in clear daylight and on TV screens all around the world.

The issue for the coming phase is not the choice between George Bush and Bill Clinton. It is for the Palestinians to stick to their fundamentals. The American administration has always been biased toward Israel and committed to uphold its strategic superiority and to reinforce its economy. We should remember that President Bush, who is admired wholeheartedly by some of us, was the person who destroyed the only Arab power that was able to keep the balance with Israel. President Bush also divided the Arabs and stole \$620 billion of their wealth by igniting a war that had no cause. President Bush has left no chance for his successor to surpass him in his support of Israel. President Bush provided Israel with loan guarantees. He brought Israel to the negotiating table with all of the Arabs. In addition, President Bush facilitated the immigration to Israel of more than 1 million Jews from all over the world. He also helped Israel acquire psychological naturalization with its neighbors as a prelude to acquiring economic naturalization with them.

The coming period is critical for the Arabs; yet, it could not be more critical than the preceding one. The PLO has broken many of the isolating barriers and has overcome all conspiracies to abolish it and wipe it off the Arab political map. Any new or former American president has to accept this fact and deal with the PLO. More firmness, no giving in, and holding to the principles is all that is needed.

Nine Leaders Assess Peace Talks' First Year

*93AE0082A London AL-QUDS AL-ARABI in Arabic
30 Oct 92 p 4*

[Interview with Palestinians in Jerusalem by Muhammad al-Dayri; date not given]

[Text] It is a year since the Madrid Conference was held. AL-QUDS AL-ARABI sought the opinion of many Palestinians, from various locations and of different political trends, about the negotiation process.

Pharmacist Nabil 'Adili, president of the Pharmacists Union in the West Bank

"The negotiations have not achieved any real progress, and they are more or less at the same point where they started a year ago. The Israeli position is rigid and has not been responsive to the principles of the negotiations and the application of the international legitimate resolutions. The Israeli position has not also accepted both the scenarios of land for peace and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination. In spite of that, I believe that negotiations with the adversary represent one type of struggle that should not be abandoned. Otherwise, the Palestinian people and their representatives will be kept out of the arena where their case is being discussed. I also believe that Palestinian withdrawal from the negotiations would cancel the resumption of the Arab-Israeli negotiation process. History has taught us that absenteeism harms those who resort to it much more than it benefits them. The Vietnamese people's experience also showed us that while some Vietnamese were fighting in Vietnam, others were negotiating in Paris. We should not despair. We should hold on to our rights and fundamentals and always hang on to them as a way of preserving our unity and the intifadah's achievements. I would like to assure those who are not confident and who are doubtful that the failure to reach an accord at the negotiating table so far indicates that our delegates are holding on to our fundamental rights."

Dr. Hatim Abu-Ghazalah, president of the Palestinian-French Friendship Association

"I believe that the failure of the peace negotiations to achieve results in the year since they began has significant meaning. This is because the Arab delegates are playing the negotiating game with Israel, using the principle of open cards.... Israel has its strategic stand with regard to the land. It considers the land as security and believes that peace is only a means to have security, and nothing else. Peace does not currently present for Israel the principle of coexistence with, and opening to, the Arab world, which was the focus of the Zionist philosophy 100 years ago. The present Zionist rule has changed from this philosophy.

"I consider the negotiation principle an essential one that should not be abandoned. Arab and international realities, especially the American dominance over world politics and the transformation of the UN Security Council into an

American national security council, demands that the Palestinians be rational instead of emotional. This should be accomplished within the framework of complete adherence to Palestinian fundamentals and while taking into consideration the fact that negotiations are only a means, and not a target. In this respect, the Palestinian people could head into a transitional period with all the resources for building the infrastructure for a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The power and status of the Palestinian delegation should be determined to be that of a negotiating team and not that of a decision maker. UN Resolution 242 should act as a reference for the negotiations with regard to determining the characteristics of the transitional phase or the final status of the occupied territories. It is necessary that Palestinian delegation not give up this reference and even that it makes sure that Resolution 242 remains as the reference after the transitional period. This is explained by the fact that what is determined through the infrastructure of the transitional phase will be the same as what would be determined at the birth of the Palestinian state and its legal dominance over the regions that were occupied in 1967. Otherwise, the Palestinian state's powers and dominance over those territories will be denied, and it will be conceded that autonomous rule is only over the people and not the land. There should also be a complete commitment to coordination and consultation with all of the other Arab delegations because this coordination, as well as a unified stand, are bargaining cards in the hands of the Palestinians—and the Palestinian card is the weaker at the negotiating table."

Bashir al-Barghuthi, editor in chief of AL-TALI'A

"In fact, in the whole year since the Madrid Conference was held and the negotiations began, there has been disappointment for two factions—those who thought that the Palestinians would yield and those who believed that the conference would accomplish some results for us—so that, in fact, both factions had exaggerated impressions.

"Yes, the negotiations achieved nothing. The question raised today is: 'Why should there be no invitation for a new conference, as long as negotiations have achieved nothing in the year since the conference?' Does this not call for another conference, especially because of the clause in the first invitation about the possibility of a second conference if all parties agreed to it?"

Samiha Khalil, president of the Family Revitalization Association

After a whole year of negotiations with Israel, it has become evident to our people that these negotiations have failed completely. We have also become certain that the negotiations did not and will not restore any of our legitimate rights.

These results came about, though our negotiating team presented during seven sessions, and over a period of a whole year, the following Palestinian fundamentals:

- An independent state on the native soil.
- Jerusalem as Palestine's capital.
- Complete withdrawal.

- The right of return and of self determination.
- The removal of settlements.

These fundamental points were approved by the United Nations. Nevertheless, Israel is striving for expansion, not withdrawal. Israel is seeking to import Jews from all over the world, with financing from America and Europe, in order to expand the settlements. By doing this, Israel is replacing Palestinians with world Jewry.

In spite of that, we are a people who love peace, aspire for it, and work toward achieving it with all our hearts. Let it be known to the whole world that the Palestinian people do not reject peace. They only refuse to give up. Israel has proved that it rejects peace.

Lawyer 'Ali Ghuzlan, president of the Arab Lawyers Committee in the West Bank

The PLO and its leadership have managed to impose themselves and their existence on the talks over the past year. I believe that even though the PLO could not enter through the door at the Madrid Conference, it managed to enter through all the windows during the year of talks. In reality, it was proved that the PLO leadership abroad was the one that supervised and administered these negotiations.

We should keep in mind that during the past year the negotiations passed through two phases. The first phase was that of the Likud regime in Israel, when Israel's stand vis-a-vis the negotiations was clear. The second was that of the past 100 days, during which time the Labor party assumed power. This second phase started with optimistic feelings; yet, it is still foggy. We had previously warned against too much optimism about the transfer of authority from Likud to Labor. In our view, the Palestinian negotiator should take into consideration during this phase the fact that the Labor party is keeping the same old Israeli policy, but using different tactics. The Israeli endeavor during this phase is to reach an agreement with the Arab parties to the negotiations and then deal with the Palestinians alone, when the transitional period ends. The Palestinians are well aware of this situation. Subsequently, any agreement on the transitional period should comprise the visions, bases, and principles of the ensuing phase. In other words, the features of the coming phase should be demarcated during the transitional period.

With regard to withdrawing from the negotiations, I find that this is not an easy thing to do. The decision to be made on this issue should be an Arab decision and not a separate, Palestinian one.

Journalist Hanna Sinyurah, editor in chief of AL-FAJR

The results of the bilateral and multilateral negotiations that lasted a whole year after the Madrid Conference first provide a clear persuasion for all sides about the importance of peace. Secondly, the results show that during this long period of negotiations this same peace has not been transferred into a tangible reality. Paradoxically,

toward the end of this year of negotiations a tense atmosphere, nearer to war than peace, dominates the region. On the other hand, this contradiction points to existing "tactics." Military moves are accelerated for a while, then they calm down and are replaced by politics. I think that this is a dangerous tactic. There should be full concentration on political negotiations on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, with no hidden intentions of doing the opposite. Yet, what the Israeli Government has done so far is refuse to deal with us according to these two resolutions. Subsequently, the Israeli Government is closing the way for both a comprehensive and permanent settlement and a supposedly temporary one. This, in fact, is the reason that the year's negotiations kept rotating around one issue and were unable to go forward toward essential issues on the road to peace. Regarding this matter, it is noticed that Rabin's government only has differed from Shamir's in the pleasant tone of its declarations.

In addition, Rabin's government has reversed its declared priorities. It rushed toward the Syrian route, perhaps to play the game of disintegrating the Arab negotiating parties. I do not believe that this would serve the peace process in the end.

'Abd-al-Latif Ghayth, Jerusalem

I believe that the negotiations produced no positive results on any route or at any level. According to the invitation to the conference, there should have been, after one year, both a real achievement and a beginning to an agreement for autonomous rule. These two issues were contained in Baker's promises. At the end of a whole year, the talks have not yet accomplished these results.

I believe that Israel is not interested in making any concessions, even within the sphere of what had been agreed upon. Besides, Israel was beating around the bush and talking about nonessential matters. As for the American party, it seems that its role became frozen as soon as the other parties got to the negotiating table. The American concern was to have the parties meet around the negotiating table, and it exercised no pressure on the more stubborn party, which was the Israeli one. In this contest, there was no place for the second guardian, Russia. Russia could not be considered as a guardian to the conference. In fact, it followed in the Americans' foot steps. I believe that the Palestinians made a grave mistake when they contributed in haste to this conference. They should have insisted on a clearer and more committable program. They should have insisted on negotiations that would be carried out within a committed and completely legitimate international conference. Without that, the nature and conditions of negotiations would not guarantee results for a just and comprehensive solution in the region.

I believe that the best solution would be to transfer the issue to the United Nations. I also believe that these negotiations were useless. If both America and the world

were concerned about results, then the matter should be transferred to the United Nations, which in turn would be obligated to make all of parties implement the legitimate resolutions. This necessitates sincere intentions to attain peace from all parties, specially Israel and the United States.

Mustafa al-Natshah, former head of al-Khalil Municipality and member of the negotiating team

We were expecting the negotiations to be over in a year. Yet, it seems that it will take years. The negotiations are at a standstill because of deep differences between Palestinian and Israeli views. The Palestinians would like Resolution 242 to be implemented during both the transitional and final phases. They also would like authority to be transferred to the people through an elected constitutional council, which would have authority over land and people. In addition, the Palestinians would like to trade peace for land. The opponent refuses to implement Resolution 242 during the transitional period and to accept the constitutional council. The opponent also wants to delegate authority to an administrative council, which means that the authority of the occupier remains and the occupier would remain as the source of power during the autonomous-rule phase. This means that Israelis would like to share employment with Palestinians while maintaining their authority.

Unfortunately, the American administration, against Palestinian expectations, made no move to promote the negotiations. Instead, it was satisfied with an observer's role. In some instances, it even exercised the role of advising the Palestinian side to accept the Israeli view point.

As I said, it seems to me that the negotiations will proceed toward a dead end. I did not participate in the sixth and seventh sessions because I believed that they would not bring about any progress in the negotiations and that they were only held to serve the elections and satisfy President Bush.

In my view, the Palestinians and their leadership, especially the Palestinian National Council, must evaluate all events, starting with the period before Madrid up to this moment. Then they should make the right decision.

Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Palestinian negotiating team

It has been a tough year, but some changes took place. We succeeded as Palestinians to impose the Palestinian Liberation Organization's contribution openly and practically. We have also proved the existence of Palestinians, both inside and outside the occupied territories, in a formal manner and at numerous meetings. This simply means that we are taking part in the negotiations as representatives of a people and not of a certain geographical region.

Shamir's failure means the failure of those ideas that had stemmed out of past fundamental stands. Subsequently, we hope that Rabin will not be bound by the same restrictions that Shamir had put upon the talks. Rabin's party demands that he not do that. However, what really matters is what is actually put into practice. The peace process is progressing at a much slower pace than expected.

Committee Meets To Form 'National Health Plan'

*93AE0100B London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic
2 Nov 92 p 4*

[Excerpts] Jerusalem—The National Health Plan Committee met the day before yesterday in the offices of the professional union in Bayt Hanina. The meeting was attended by a number of health institutes and personnel from all parts of the West Bank.

Dr. 'Arafat al-Hidmi, deputy chairman of the health plan, made a speech in which he said the plan is the fruit of perseverance and sustained efforts. It is a national plan in that it has been prepared by and for the Palestinians. It is the fruit of the work of hundreds of people in the country.

Planning, he added, is an ongoing and continuous process, and what has been achieved so far constitutes the backbone of the plan. What remains to be done is to determine the necessary manpower and financial resources. These efforts are now being carried in cooperation with the doctors' association in the West Bank and the medical association in the Gaza Strip. The plan will be finalized in the first quarter of the coming year. [passage omitted]

He was followed by Dr. Ziyad 'Abdin, director of the projected national health plan, who spoke about the method of work that has been followed in laying down the plan, which is based on three axis:

1. The health requirements as conceived by providers of services, which have been included in part 3, section 1. [as published]
2. The health requirements and priorities as conceived by the services' users, which have been included in part 3, section 2.
3. The inadequacies in the scientific structure as a whole, which have been included in part 1 of the plan, with a complete description of the entire scientific situation.

'Abdin added that the plan is comprehensive and complete, covering all the various health fields. It has been classified under three main titles: preventive services, health fortifying, and health protection, and covers 30 fields.

Dr. 'Abdin said that the objective recommendations by users of the services, in participation with the providers and the decision-makers, take into consideration the following standards:

- That the services are founded on a scientific basis;
- That they be applicable and achievable.
- That they be linked to a specific time schedule and continual. [passage omitted]

EGYPT

Decree Targets False Claims for Quake Damage

93AF0217D Cairo *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY* in English
4 Nov 92 p 2

[Article by Doaa El-Bey: "Opportunity Knocks"]

[Text] While the sweeping majority of Egyptians hurried to assist the quake victims, donating money, food and clothes, a few sought to benefit from the ordeal. Doaa El-Bey reports.

A decree issued by Prime Minister Atef Sidki last weekend provided a punishment of seven years imprisonment to those who seek to acquire new housing in government-financed projects by falsely claiming that they lost their homes in the quake.

The penalty will be increased to seven years hard labour if the offender uses forged papers or deliberately sabotages his or her home.

The Prime Minister acted in his capacity as deputy military governor general to foil attempts by a small minority who sought to make selfish gains from the national tragedy.

Within hours, more than 75 families returned the keys of the apartments which were assigned to them at El-Salam City, north-east of Cairo. These, presumably, were families who lived in old or dilapidated homes and sought to gain new housing by posing as homeless quake victims. Other families who made the same false claim were discovered as they were registered in army-run camps.

A building inspector in Cairo's El-Wayli district was arrested for pronouncing a building in the neighbourhood unsound although it was in good condition. The landlord, who hoped to make a killing by pulling down the building and constructing another one or selling the land, was also arrested. Investigations proved that six tenants had used the certificate issued by the inspector to acquire new government housing at the satellite city of El-Dweika.

Others used false papers. In Giza, Saeed El-Sayed, who has a long record of forgery to his name, was arrested and a bundle of false letters, purportedly issued by government departments, was seized in his possession. The

letters alleged that certain buildings had collapsed in the quake and that their owners were entitled to new housing.

Some women submitted false death certificates, claiming that their husbands, or the head of the household, had perished under the rubble of a collapsed home. This would have entitled them to financial compensations as well as new housing.

More extreme was the action of the primary school principal at the village of Nazlet Ebeid in the governorate of Minya. Assisted by 12 villagers, the principal wrecked his own school in the hope that the government would build him a new one. He has been arrested.

Other acts of frauds reported during the past two weeks included a man arrested for making charms that would guard their bearers against earthquakes and others posing as construction engineers or doctors.

Some relief workers have apparently come across swindling attempts and now are taking great precautions to ensure that aid reaches those who actually need it. "We do not give aid or medicine to anyone who knocks on our door," said Abdel-Wahab Shalabi, general manager of the Red Crescent Society. "Our delegates visit the affected areas and can determine who is in real need of help and who is trying to usurp the rights of the victims. As for medicine, the society does not hand it to individuals but to hospitals to guarantee that it will reach those who need it."

Commentary Discusses Media Feud Over Earthquake

93AF0217F Cairo *AL-AHRAM WEEKLY* in English
4 Nov 92 p 5

[Article by Mona Anis: "The Press This Week: The Wrath of God"; italicized words and quotation marks as published]

[Text] The 12 October earthquake and relief operations continued to provide all the newspaper's banners for a second week.

Much of the editorial material too was still dealing with the aftermath of the disaster, though two other topics were also discussed in the editorials and leading columns; the local council elections scheduled for 3 November, and the seventh round of Middle East peace talks resumed in Washington last week.

The earthquake, or more precisely the ability of the government to deal with its disastrous effects which left tens of thousands of people homeless, was an issue which both opposition and government tried to capitalise on for election campaign purposes.

The Society of Muslim Brothers in Egypt issued last week a statement claiming that God has sent the earthquake as a message to the Egyptian people that they have

to do something about the injustice prevailing in Egypt or else face the wrath of God.

Last Friday, the editor-in-chief of the national weekly AL-MUSSAWAR, Makram Mohamed Ahmed, attacks the Society's attempt to make use of the disaster to propagate its ideology.

Makram said: "Most of the victims of the earthquake were the poor of this country who lived in narrow alleyways in semi-derelict houses where the tremor was the final straw that made them tumble down. Most of the casualties were among school children who panicked while trying to leave school, and were injured in the ensuing stampedes.

"What did any of those poor people do to deserve the wrath of God? Is it not high time that [certain parties] stopped playing with the emotions of simple people, stop these fraudulent attempts, because the catastrophe of the earthquake could have had much worse effects had not God been merciful. In a city like Cairo, with 14 million inhabitants and 60 per cent of its houses in very bad shape, the damage could have been much greater. That is was not a cause for thanksgiving to God."

Makram argued: "There may be a divine message in the earthquake, but it is not a message of revenge as the statement of the Muslim Brotherhood claims. The earthquake was a big test for the whole of Egypt, both rulers and ruled...As I do not intend to talk about Mubarak in this context, I will rather talk about his government, and how it rose to its responsibility and achieved what amounts to a miracle."

Makram listed the efforts of the government in various relief operations saying that: Dr Atef Sidki's government skillfully confronted the effects of the earthquake in a sound scientific manner characterised by human sympathy."

He continued: "The feeling of unity [in the face of the disaster] which prevailed Egypt and made the able extend their hands to the disprivileged, pumping into the whole nation a sense of collective responsibility, did not please those who do not want Egypt to be a stable homeland...They tried to seize the opportunity and belittle the efforts of the whole nation, in order to make gain some assets for their candidates in the local elections."

Last Tuesday, Fahmi Howeidi in AL-AHRAM commented on the debate. Under the title *A Crack in Our House*, Howeidi wrote: "If we really want to draw the lessons of the earthquake and to capitalise on them for the benefit of all, there is no other way than to think deeply and reconsider. This cannot be done unless we speak frankly. Many confessions have to be made, the causes of each representing a crack in our daily life, cracks that may combine to shatter our dreams, unless repaired urgently."

One of the cracks Howeidi discussed was that between the advocates of political Islam and their opponents.

Howeidi argued: "Some people have chosen not to discuss the relationship of the earthquake to the real world, but its relationship to the unknown. Some said the earthquake was a punishment from God, a claim which others [e.g. Makram] categorically denied.

"Regardless of the basis of those arguments I do not think shifting the dialogue around the earthquake into the realm of investigating Divine Wisdom is a healthy phenomenon. Such matters cannot be proven by human beings."

Howeidi argued: "From the point of view of a believer, the motion of the universe is not an arbitrary one, as God orders the motion of the universe and all its affairs. Any calamity that afflicts people has a divine message, whether warning, testing or punishment. The causes of events are rooted in Divine Wisdom. The God of the universe wills destiny and activates the causes accordingly. Thus belief in God does not rule out scientific causes [of any natural phenomenon], as some writers have argued. It simply establishes a relationship between destiny and causes, in which causes work to bring about what is destined [by God]. The Divine Wisdom behind both causes and destiny may sometimes be comprehended by man, but it may also be hidden."

He continued: "It is wise to believe that we cannot fully comprehend the Divine Wisdom behind the earthquake, but to say so does not at all mean that we deny that there is any wisdom behind it. Even if we cannot be certain of the full dimensions of this wisdom, we should still acknowledge the message at its essential level, as a call for people to wake up and be alert."

Howeidi continued: "Some parties have rushed to defend the government, saying it has done its duty fully in the best possible way, and accusing those who criticise the government of being unpatriotic and disloyal to the homeland. We want to remind those parties that the government is not the sole representative of the homeland, and that accusations concerning the patriotism of any party is a hateful discourse that should not be resorted to by leaders of opinion." Howeidi had a stronger grievance against the left-wing opposition weekly of AL-AHALI.

Commenting on an article which appeared in AL-AHALI on 12 October, Howeidi said: "A number of intellectuals have failed to rise to the responsibility of dialogue at the present stage. They have seized the opportunity to try and settle political accounts. Some of them have even used the opportunity to slander the Islamists, accusing them or propagating what one of those intellectuals termed as 'superstitious thought.'"

Howeidi reminded those who called the thought of the Islamists superstitious that "as a matter of fact you are slandering (Islamic) religion."

Businessmen Call for Developing Trade Offices
93AF0217G Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
28 Oct 92 p 4

[Article by Safaa Gamal-Eddin: "Representation in a New Commercial World"]

[Text] Business people tell Safaa Gamal-Eddin that the Commercial Representation Office needs development if it is to function efficiently under new economic circumstances.

The Commercial Representation Office (CRO) offers some important services to businessmen both in Egypt and abroad, providing information and statistics, and facilities for exhibitions and marketing. The CRO's capacity, says Said El-Tawil, head of the Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA), is quite extensive. But, he warns, international market developments and political changes mean that the CRO is in urgent need of development.

Changing world trading patterns are forcing Egypt to reorganise its traditional means of trade. The main bases for foreign trade in the past—bilateral agreements and counter-trade deals—were mostly contracted through the public sector. But as the economic reform programme progresses, private businessmen will play a greater role in discussing laws and creating national economic policies. The private sector is also expected to play a greater role in international trade.

Against this background there are calls for changes in the way the CRO functions. In order to support the private sector and encourage its participation in economic development, the CRO will have to adapt.

The CRO, says El-Tawil, should relay precise information on the movements of international markets, consumption patterns and possibilities for increasing exports and maintaining the competitive edge of Egyptian goods. Commercial representation offices abroad should also report on changes in trade laws and procedures. In general the CRO is required to act as an agent for the business sector as well as keeping an eye on developments in the international economy.

Reductions in the application of systems of preferential treatment in international trade and changes in customs and financing systems, as well as technological advances, all have a direct and indirect impact on Egypt's economic position, says El-Tawil. He cites the example of changes in the system of preferential treatment with eastern European countries, especially with Poland, where previously Egyptian goods enjoyed customs' discounts of up to 70 per cent, compared to the present 30 per cent. This is an area where the CRO can play an effective role, either by improving the terms of preferential treatment given by countries still operating under the system, or by securing better terms of trade agreements with other countries.

The CRO is also expected to market Egyptian products abroad, coordinating communications and field visits

for prospective buyers. It will assist businessmen in obtaining facilities at international trade exhibitions, and try to avoid previously experienced pitfalls. It should also provide businessmen with information on the privileges his exports enjoy, his customs rights, rationalising the quantity of imports, and international customs outlets. Information will also be provided on the privileges and exemptions certain Egyptian goods enjoy abroad. The CRO will acquaint businessmen with sources of financing abroad in the form of grants, soft loans, and other facilities.

Taher El-Sherif, the secretary-general of the EBA believes that under present circumstances the CRO will be hard put to keep up with the international changes and continue to play its role in Egypt's various economic sectors.

The CRO, he says, has to increase both its human and material resources. The number of staff in its bureaus abroad will have to be expanded; need to be assigned in a well studied manner; and great care must be taken in choosing suitable commercial representatives, and the representatives should be allowed to exploit foreign expertise to develop his or her performance. The CRO should also place greater emphasis on training employees, to equip them with modern techniques in management and marketing, and to teach them how to work within the new international economic situation.

The CRO offices abroad—which number about 50 today—need additional material support in the form of up-to-date communication equipment, says El-Sherif. The CRO should pay attention to information networks and establishing links between these and the Cabinet Information Centre. An additional budget should also be allocated for public relations work and communication with foreign producers and importers. This would give the CRO freedom of movement, especially to attend conferences and keep abreast of changes in other countries.

The state, says El-Sherif, should reassess the budget allocated to technical bureaus, and consider extending greater material support to the CRO. The necessary equipment could be financed from the revenue of trade deals concluded through the CRO.

Dr Nayla Alouba, head of the EBA Export Committee, is adamant that since accurate and up-to-date information is a pre-requisite for making effective economic decisions, any form of support or expenditure on developing the CRO is an investment whose future returns will come in the shape of increased Egyptian exports.

Trade liberalisation, says Dr Alouba, and changes in the structure of Egyptian foreign trade have produced an increased reliance on non-traditional exports, with a concomitant need to comply with quality specifications (ISO 9000). This extends to finance, accounting, training

and labour in any exporting establishment. The challenge can only be met by a better equipped, more effective and influential Commercial Representation Office.

Urban Development of Sinai Urged

*93AF0217B Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
28 Oct 92 p 5*

[Article by Ragab El-Banna: "A National Plan for Sinai"; boldface words as published]

[Text] Throughout history, Sinai has presented a true test of our national will and ability. Following the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Sinai after the 1956 tripartite aggression by Britain, France and Israel, we discovered that the military invasion was only the first in a series of challenges to our territorial integrity. As awareness grew of the strategic importance of Sinai to Egypt as its eastern gateway and front defence line, strategists and policy makers began to urge developing and populating the Sinai and linking it more closely with the Nile valley, not only through transportation and communications, but culturally and socially as well. However, Sinai development remained more a pipe dream than anything else and little was accomplished in a practical way during the period that preceded the 1967 June War and the Israeli occupation. Serious discussion of the topic resumed after Egypt regained sovereignty over Sinai following the October War of 1973, and although much progress has since been made, development of the Sinai still requires a new vision to transform it from a simple development project to a national project of high priority.

One could attempt to take some of the wind out of our sails by pointing out that the Ministry of Urban Development and New Societies already has a major project in the Sinai. However, that project is far smaller in scope than the proposed "national project" which demands a comprehensive strategy, not only for the urban development of the Sinai, but to completely restructure it, economically and socially, so as to integrate it with the rest of the republic and end the long-felt sense of isolation and neglect and the residual effects of Israeli occupation.

In this context, we should recognise the unique work of social-anthropologist Dr Ahmed Abu-Zeid who headed a research team in conducting a 14-month field study of Sinai bedouin society as part of a project of the Egyptian Centre for Social Research to study desert societies in Egypt. To anyone involved in urban and social planning in Sinai, Dr Zeid's research is indispensable. Published in two volumes by the Centre for Social Research, the study provides a comprehensive background of Sinai geography, history, society and economy and a detailed analysis of the social and cultural norms of Sinai tribal societies.

The book provokes certain essential questions that must be examined. The anniversary of the October War is an

opportunity to discuss what should be done to achieve the indisputable strategic goals in the Sinai. These are increasing the population density in an area that exceeds 60 thousand square kilometres, instituting large agricultural, mining, tourist and fishery projects and ultimately incorporating Sinai society into the greater national society.

To be fair, much credit must be given to the various ministries and the northern and southern Sinai governorates for their efforts in developing the peninsula. However, the national dream of Sinai development we refer to, demands certain practical steps:

1. Engaging scientists and specialists in all fields to develop an integrated development plan based on a clear strategic vision that observes a balance between diverse elements.
2. Promulgating a law for the establishment of higher national executive organisation for development of the Sinai. This organisation will be directly responsible to the President, its chairman will have prime ministerial rank and with the full authority of that rank. The organisation will be autonomous and completely based in the Sinai, where its members will assume permanent residence, under no pretext being allowed to reside in Cairo. The organisation's functions will be to plan and coordinate the activity of central government agencies and local agencies in implementing projects.
3. Promulgating a more flexible law for the development of Sinai than the extant law pertaining to the development of desert zones. This law should contain a provision defining the functions of the proposed Sinai Development Organisations and including special regulations for investment that give greater concessions to investment in Sinai industrial, agricultural and tourist activities. It should also ban foreign ownership of land or companies in the Sinai so that all its institutions remain Egyptian first and Arab second. There are ample opportunities for foreign investment elsewhere in the country and there are more than enough facilities and exemptions to encourage expansion of commercial activities in these areas.
4. Opening the door effectively to productive projects that exploit the resources of the Sinai so as to provide work opportunities that will attract new residents, particularly the young. The potential for this is enormous. There are the stretches of coasts and the Bardouel lake from which 65 per cent of our national fish exports are derived and which is the only lake in Egypt free of pollution. The opportunity for expanding the tourist industry in these areas is very attractive and simultaneously it will contribute to raising the standard of living in the Sinai and open the Sinai to the world in general. Yet, while we appreciate the great economic surge an expansion in tourism would provide, we must also concern ourselves with the development of Sinai society

as a whole so as to rid it of the sense of cultural isolation and the psychological effects of years of Israeli military occupation.

Although financing such a major project will certainly present an obstacle, it should nevertheless receive priority due to Sinai's strategic importance to the national security. There have been several proposals in this regard, such as establishing a Sinai Development Fund. This fund would be collected through a diverse set of small fees, such as an additional five piastre postage stamp, a fifty piastre add-on tax to purchases, or LE1 for every LE1000 worth of advertisements and commissions. With such small contributions, it would be possible to create a fund of millions.

The Sinai is not just another desert area in Egypt, nor is it simply another sparsely populated area that could absorb the burgeoning populations of the capital and major cities. Sinai is far more important. It is a symbol of our national sovereignty and an integral component of our national security.

Work Representation Law Criticized

93AF0217E Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English
4 Nov 92 p 5

[Article by Laila Takla: "Defining the Essential Peasant and Worker?"; boldface words as published]

[Text] Dr Laila Takla in AL-AHRAM finds the constitutional stipulation setting aside half the seats in parliament for workers and peasants outdated.

Article 87 of the Constitution stipulates that at least half the elected members of the People's Assembly must be workers and peasants or farmers. Article 2 Law No. 38 of 1972, concerning the People's Assembly, defines who is a worker and who is a peasant farmer and at least half the seats in representative and legislative assemblies are reserved for those to whom this definition applies. Similar conditions now have to be met in many political and indeed economic activities.

There is no disputing the fact that this constitutional provision and this legal definition were introduced at a certain time, and under certain circumstances, in order to give the opportunity of political participation to groups which had formerly been excluded from participating in this way.

On 1 January 1987 AL-AHRAM published an article of mine entitled "Workers and peasants farmers: why? and for how long?" which analysed ten reasons why this constitutional provision should be objectively reviewed now that 35 years had passed since it came into effect. But there were also many other considerations at that time—party considerations reflecting a desire for popularity, deeply engrained tendencies to reject all change, fear of opening up the floodgates by making amendments to the Constitution—all of which clearly made it

unacceptable and inconceivable for the Constitution to be amended and this "protective clause" to be removed.

Yet even if we accept that there are still some arguments today for regarding the Constitution as inviolable, including a number that have some validity, these same arguments today call for the People's Assembly Law to be amended; in fact they make it imperative to change the law's definition of workers and farmers as a first step until the Constitution can be amended and the principle of equality for all citizens prevails.

The definition given in the People's Assembly Law does the community of workers and peasant farmers (fellahin) injustice, and is an affront to their dignity. According to this law, a "fellah" is someone whose sole occupation and principal means of subsistence is agriculture, and who lives in the countryside, provided he and his wife and children below the age of majority do not own or rent more than ten feddans of land.

All this verbiage has become meaningless today, as the circumstances in which this definition was framed have changed and no longer apply. A farmer is quite simply someone who works in agriculture and makes his living from it, whether as a landowner or as a tenant, and whether he owns five feddans or ten feddans or more. The point is that the person should belong to this group, understand its conditions, experience its problems and be fully aware of the many considerations and circumstances that affect his profession, whether concerning questions of irrigation or drainage, pesticides and fertilisers, problems of supply and marketing or the impact of the mechanisation of agriculture or cooperative associations etc.

The important thing is that he should experience the hopes and fears of this group he belongs to, and thus be able to express its demands, look after its interests and put forward proposals, opinions and legislative bills that will enable it to make a more effective contribution to development.

Several criticisms can be made of the current definition:

(1) It completely confuses two separate issues—the essential nature of a job, i.e. a definition of what it is and who does it, which is what is required, and assumptions about the material income derived from that job, which is a tenuous measure.

(2) Even with regard to estimating people's income, it is based on the erroneous assumption that someone who owns 20 whole feddans of land is wealthier than someone who rents only ten. We all know that the situation is, in the vast majority of cases, completely the opposite.

(3) So why ten feddans? Does someone who owns or rents more than ten feddans, while still making his living from agriculture, stop being a farmer? Does this arbitrary figure still hold good today as a standard for categorising farmers?

(4) A farmer may be a poor farmer or a rich farmer, a lazy farmer or an energetic, highly successful farmer. Not being poor does not mean he is not a fellah, just as a lawyer is still a lawyer whether he takes one case a year and earns a pittance or twenty cases every month and earns a fortune. The criterion is the type of work he does, not how much income it generates.

(5) In actual practice and experience, as the records of the People's Assembly will attest, farmers and workers have been well treated by members who were not elected in such a capacity. They have tabled thoughtfully, carefully and competently worked-out bills, all of which have had the greatest possible effect in ending injustice to workers and farmers and improving their economic and social conditions, in the belief that progress for workers and farmers is progress for the whole society, not just one section of it.

(6) Another criticism of this definition is that it introduces a duality into the "new concept of class," because it makes a distinction even among farmers themselves. It is based on the assumption that there are "peasant farmers" (fellahin) and "agriculturalists," that fellahin are poor and oppressed while agriculturalists are men of means, and that only the former deserve attention and special treatment.

Actually, in the "social democratic" system every farmer is an agriculturalist, and every agriculturalist is a farmer. The distinction may once have been valid, but this is why the 1952 Revolution came about, to bring the classes closer together, to dissolve the distinctions between them etc. It is absurd that after 40 years the revolutionary system has not even managed to remove distinctions between groups working in the same profession, and likewise absurd that such distinctions should continue to be found in the text of laws and decrees!

(7) The current definition of a farmer means that a hard working farmer is penalised for his hard work, because if he "expands his operations" by working and struggling to achieve his ambition of owning 15 feddans he is "penalised" for this by no longer coming under the "protective clause!" At the same time, it also means that anyone who just sticks with his ten feddans, but buys and sells livestock or whatever and makes a lot of money, continues to enjoy the protection of the clause on the grounds that he is toiling and oppressed!

So much for the definition of a farmer/peasant. The definition of a worker is even odder, as it assumes that workers begin their working lives without having obtained any higher qualifications, despite the fact that nowadays applied technology has advanced to such a degree that every profession is a craft, and every craft a profession. The article stipulates that a worker is someone engaged in manual or mental work in agriculture, industry or services who is primarily dependent on his income from this work, does not belong to a professional association and is not on the commercial register. All of this might be acceptable were it not for the fact

that it then adds the further condition that a worker should not have any higher qualification, though it makes an exception for those who begin their careers as workers and obtain qualifications later.

This provision means that we are putting up social class barriers in a society that is trying to be a democratic society in which citizens are free to be socially mobile and to choose the kind of work they want. It makes a meaningless distinction between someone who works as a carpenter and then gains a higher qualification and someone who obtains qualifications and then works as a carpenter. According to the current definition, if a young man manages to obtain a university diploma and then decides to become an artisan this does not make him a worker, because he is "branded" by having obtained that diploma.

There is an obvious conflict of policies here. On the one hand we encourage higher education, making it free of charge. Thousands of young people, including many sons of workers and artisans, go to university and obtain higher qualifications which make them—sometimes—better able to think scientifically and more broadmindedly. Yet on the other hand if they want to follow in their fathers' footsteps and enter their fathers' professions they are not, according to this law, regarded as "workers."

I recall that in July 1976 I presented a proposal to parliament that the phrase "shall not be graduates of universities or higher institutions or military colleges," confirming that an educated person cannot be a worker, should be deleted from Article 2 of Law 83 of 1973. I put forward this proposal in the belief that we desperately need workers to have knowledge and people with knowledge to become workers, and because large numbers of university graduates are turning to manual work.

This trend should be encouraged, because the future of development in Egypt depends on the extent to which both workers and farmers can master the basic principles and applications of science and technology, and on their ability to make a positive, conscious and knowledgeable contribution to the passing of legislation.

Support for this demand was too weak, and less than the minimum required. The article was in fact amended, but I don't think this had anything to do with my proposal, as the amendment merely deleted the words "or military colleges!"

Article 2 of the People's Assembly Law concludes with the strange and arbitrary stipulation that 15 May 1971 shall be the cut-off date for defining the status of workers and farmers. Any change in the status of an individual from non-worker to worker cannot be recognised if the change occurred after 15 May 1971! Why this restriction?

Class restricts social mobility, preventing farmers from being teachers and teachers from being workers. But there is also a time limit involved: before 23 July 1952

there were practical reasons why people were not socially mobile; since 15 May 1971 there has been a legal reason.

The basic question remains why we have these restrictions, and whose interest are served by this rigidity and these shackles on people's freedom of social mobility in all directions: first the restriction on the number of feddans, then the lack-of-qualifications provision, and then the time barrier created by this artificial cut-off date.

When I proposed a bill in parliament in 1989 to amend this article of the People's Assembly Law it was rejected, but I was not surprised. I had expected this to happen. In fact I thought that merely shelving it by recording it and referring it to the appropriate committee, rather than literally "shelving" it, i.e. putting it away on a shelf with other bills I have proposed, was a step in the right direction.

The amazing thing, however, was the dogged insistence on the part of those who enjoy the advantage of the "protective clause" on keeping the benefits of this protection confined within the narrowest limits possible, in opposition to some of their own colleagues and contrary to the public interest.

I am even more inclined to believe nowadays that current circumstances, the realities of the age and the goals we are pursuing all make it imperative that this article should now be amended to read:

"A farmer is someone who works in agriculture as his principle means of subsistence; and a worker is someone engaged in manual or mental work who does not belong to a professional association."

This will have to do until we can make use of Article 189 of the Constitution, which permits the Constitution to be amended and rules to be devised for making such amendments.

JORDAN

Europe Gives Technical, Financial Aid

93AE0105A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Nov 92 p 10

[Report from Amman: "Jordan's Minister of Planning To Visit Luxembourg and Germany For Aid to Finance Projects"]

[Text] Jordanian Minister of Planning Dr. Ziad Fariz today begins a visit to Luxembourg and Germany to negotiate for technical and financial aid to Jordan from the two European countries.

Before leaving Amman for Luxembourg, Fariz told the Jordan wire service PETRA that his negotiations there will focus on three Jordanian projects and on the manner of and stipulations for obtaining some 66 million dinars in aggregate financing from the European Investment Bank.

The first project involves repairs and improvements to the King 'Abdallah Canal in order to reduce water waste as a consequence of especially harsh weather last winter. This project is estimated to cost some 9 million dinars.

The second project, which is expected to cost 7 million dinars, would raise the height of al-Kafrayn Dam in order to increase its water capacity.

The third project would complete the remaining stage of a 71-km highway to link Amman with Aqaba. The project also comprises building a road from the Amman suburb of al-Suwaylah to the Queen Aliya International Airport. This project would cost about 50 million dinars.

Fariz's visit to Germany will deal with German technical and financial aid to Jordan amounting to some 75.4 million marks, of which about 50 million marks will be in the form of financial aid and the remainder will be in technical aid.

The sum of 57 million marks will go for repairing and rehabilitating Jordan's main water purification facility at al-Kharbah al-Samra'. Damage to the station and signs of water pollution prompted the Jordanian government to destroy crops irrigated with its water output and to plan its rehabilitation.

Other projects, estimated to cost about 12 million marks, call for replacing the water pipeline in al-Aghwar al-Shamaliyah in the northwestern region of the country and for sewer rehabilitation in the northern city of Irbid.

Germany has also promised Jordan technical aid valued at 25.2 million marks, of which 20 million marks is this year's allocation. The remaining 5.2 million marks represent the balance of previous allotments.

Fariz said that he will have talks in Germany with the ministers of Economic Development and of Science and Technology, as well as with a number of German economic and financial institutions in Bonn, Berlin, and Frankfurt. He is scheduled to meet with representatives of the Foreign Aid Committee of the German parliament, the German Bank for Reconstruction, the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, the German Organization for International Development, and the German Institute for Economic Studies.

First Exchange Companies Since 1989 Open

93AE0105B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Nov 92 p 11

[Report from Amman by Salah Hazin: "First Two Licensed Money Changers Open in Amman as Black Market Recedes"]

[Text] Two money changing firms opened their doors in the Jordanian capital yesterday and began operations,

officially changing money for Jordanian citizens for the first time since February 1989 when exchange operations in the country were shut down by central bank decree.

The two firms are Sharbush Exchange, which has resumed operations under the same name in the same location in the heart of Amman, and Khalil and Jawdat al-'Alami Exchange, which returned to its former location, but under the new name of the Amman Organization for Money Changing. The two were the first to obtain the approval of Jordan's Central Bank and were allowed to begin operations as of this week "in a basic form consistent with Money Changing Law No. 26 of 1992."

The two firms received final approval just as the central bank released the third list of money changer applicants who received the bank's preliminary approval to open or reopen money changing stores in Jordan once they complete the formalities needed for final approval.

The new list includes 16 applicants whom the bank urged to proceed promptly with final approval formalities. This brings to 50 the number of money changing firms that received preliminary approval to operate. Only these firms received final approval. The owner of Sharbush Exchange told AL-HAYAH that he has resumed operations in accordance with the new law that allows him to change money without limit and entitles him to import and export currency and to purchase gold bullion in return for foreign currency trades, which, as he put it, are all among the positive aspects of the new law.

But money changing storefronts are no longer entitled to handle deposits and transfers, as in the past. They are also prohibited from opening branches abroad. Transfers, therefore, can be made only through banks.

He said that rates for currencies exchanged are determined by Jordan's central bank, which is "generally a positive procedure except that rigid enforcement could drive the black market anew."

AL-HAYAH observed obvious demand for money changing at the locations of the two aforementioned exchange firms. One citizen commented that the black market had gotten so prevalent that it was no longer possible to determine the true price of the currency to be exchanged because of that market's chaotic exchange mechanism.

A black market money changer told AL-HAYAH that he was "simply a middleman" between customers and large dealers able to exchange large sums of currency.

He explained that he obtains a commission from the dealers and that he himself employs other, smaller, brokers who bring him customers and receive commensurate commissions in return.

The money changer said that profits of large dealers, as well as commissions to middlemen and small brokers, get passed down to customers. He added that exchanges

do not work in that fashion, but operate as direct principals, giving them more profit margin leeway than black market dealers.

KUWAIT

Amir Meets With Committee Drafting Shari'ah Laws

93AE0113A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Nov 92 p 4

[Article by Kamil Hazir: "Amir of Kuwait Visits Committee on Applying Shari'ah"]

[Text] Kuwait—The visit of the amir of Kuwait, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, to the headquarters of the "High Consultative Committee on Fully Applying the Provisions of Islamic Shari'ah" and his praying the noon prayer with committee members represented an important point in the course of events and moves that the Kuwaiti scene has witnessed in past weeks. These events have received serious in-depth examination because of their timing and the expected political activity they indicate in the foreseeable future.

The visit came at a time when the halls and chambers of the National Assembly are witnessing a political atmosphere dominated by irritation over elements of confrontation with the government, with parliamentary deputies (especially representatives of the political forces in the Assembly) continuing to raise questions and propose laws and legislation.

Questions and suggestions are raining down wholesale, including issues that only yesterday were the keynotes of the elections campaign. One issue is reopening the question of the invasion, or what has come to be known as the "invasion file." Other issues are the political rights of women, citizenship and naturalization, the makeup of the population, and amending section two of the constitution (related to the question of applying Islamic shari'ah). The latter issue is expected to occupy the center of parliamentary and political activity in the coming period.

Political circles think that the amir's visit last Tuesday to the headquarters of the consultative committee had the unannounced implication of placing the question of applying shari'ah at the center of expected events. The amir expressed his appreciation of the committee's efforts toward complete implementation of the provisions of the shari'ah. He wished the committee members continued success in their discussions and recommendations based on fervent Islamic belief, and he hoped that God would help them all to do everything to promote Islam and strengthen Muslims.

The results of the recent parliamentary elections clearly showed that political ascendancy in the Kuwaiti street belongs to the Islamic currents and forces, which succeeded in forming a cohesive parliamentary force by

raising the issue of applying shari'ah on the floor of parliament. National Assembly member Mufarrij al-Mutayri, a figure in the Islamic force in parliament, thinks that the government must give the application of Islamic shari'ah top priority in its program in order to fulfill the promise that Kuwait's "legitimate authority" made at the Jiddah conference, when it stressed two things: restoring parliamentary life and applying Islamic shari'ah.

The first of these promises has been fulfilled. The second remains to take center stage in the political and parliamentary activity of the coming period. In particular, al-Mutayri sees the government's commitment to this as directly in harmony with the royal decree forming the Consultative Committee on Fully Applying Islamic Shari'ah. At the same time, various circles think that raising this question carries in it no fears of a possible confrontation between the government and the National Assembly, as there appears to be virtually complete agreement to deal with this issue with the utmost positivism, so as to agree on the new framework for the changes to be brought by the stage of "completing the application of shari'ah."

The various political circles agree on giving the grade of outstanding to the style of cooperation between the government and the National Assembly during the first week of serious dealing with Kuwaiti issues. The question of opening the invasion file, which had raised fears of a confrontation, was met with wisdom by both sides. In light of this, a secret investigating committee was formed to draw conclusions and precepts and learn lessons from the ordeal, so that, as the statements of the speaker of the Assembly implied, coming generations may avoid such an ordeal.

As for the issue of Kuwait's investments abroad, it seems that the issue has fully satisfied the conditions for being discussed, now that the results reached by the investigation committee assigned to examine the facts of these investments have been submitted to the public prosecutor to be brought before the courts. However, some people are still demanding that the investigation should include the state of Kuwaiti investments in all locations abroad and that it should not be limited to ones located in Spain, about which many questions currently are being raised.

There remains the question of public money, which constitutes one of the points that aroused sharp interest and follow-up through a campaign of mutual accusations in circles of the Union of Cooperative Societies. The question now awaits investigation by a special committee of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Economic sources say that we must learn the present situation and the size of "our expenditures during the fiscal years 1990-91, 1991-92, and 1992-93." This is particularly important because not all public expenditures and not all revenues are included in the budget. This causes confusion in planning financial policy.

In this context, economic sources have quoted frightening figures on the deficit from a report by Western diplomats in the weekly AL-SHAL. The diplomatic report indicates that the estimated deficit in 1990 amounted to \$31.3 billion. In 1991 it increased to \$38.8 billion. The estimated deficit for 1992 may reach \$6.5 billion, taking account of revenues and expenditures inside and outside the budget. Thus, the deficit accumulated as of the end of the current year will amount to about \$76.6 billion.

The Western diplomatic report mentions that from an original balance of about \$100 billion in Kuwaiti overseas investments before the occupation there remain about \$65 billion. However, the government has about \$40 billion in domestic and foreign loans outstanding against it, making the net remainder only about \$25 billion.

AL-SHAL says in this regard that such figures are merely estimates and individual assessments and that one cannot plan financial policy without putting the real figures on paper. What is meant are the figures on current investments, total spending inside and outside the budget, oil revenues, and the size and cost of loans. Knowledge of these figures, along with cautious estimates of oil revenues, will be the basis for planning the future of the Kuwaiti budget.

LEBANON

Amin al-Jumayyil Calls for Just Peace

93AE0117E London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
30 Oct 92 p 17

[Article by Amin al-Jumayyil, ex-Lebanese President: "Just Peace, Not Armed Peace"]

[Text] A year ago, on 30 October 1991, the Middle East peace conference activities started in Madrid, the capital of Spain, with the purpose of developing a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict in which the region has been floundering for 44 years.

The Arab countries and their peoples, on the one hand, and the citizens and government of the Jewish state on the other have been pulled hither and thither by contrasting atmospheres of optimism and pessimism on the fate of these negotiations. If the subject matter of the negotiations were an ordinary one, optimism would outweigh pessimism. But the issue concerns a deep and lasting psychological and human crisis that has become more complex with the passage of time, that has been touched by radicals, and that has stretched beyond its regional framework and reached the broad international arena, thus making us believe that it is the new face of the "oriental problem" that preoccupied Europe and the Islamic world through four centuries.

The Madrid conference is not the first initiative to seek to establish peace in the Middle East. This conference

was preceded by five devastating wars that were followed by a series of settlement plans that were not destined to succeed. The Camp David accord of 26 March 1979 provided new fodder for the inter-Arab conflict instead of acting as the start of a new era for lasting peace in the Middle East. One reason for the failure of that accord is that it isolated Egypt from its Arab environment because the Israeli and U.S. policy sought at the time to make that treaty an independent treaty between Egypt and Israel.

But those sponsoring the Madrid conference have obviated this mistake and made the conference a common conference for all the disputing parties. They have even gone beyond to include the neighboring Arab countries that influence the Middle East conditions greatly.

The peace components existing currently are the result of important transformations in the Arab society and the Israeli circles and of fundamental developments in the international conditions. These new transformations encourage us now to be more optimistic than pessimistic on the future of peace in the Middle East, which has not been the case in the past.

The region's countries responded to the peace initiative launched by President George Bush, brought to the countries concerned by James Baker, Bush's state secretary, and embraced at the time by the Soviet Union. The initiative was also approved by the EC [European Community] countries, even though they were not invited to participate in it actively. Thus, President Bush's initiative assumed an international character.

There is no doubt that the Soviet Union's collapse, liberation of the East European countries from the communist system, and the outcome of the Gulf war last year gave the U.S. president's initiative new momentum and created in the Arab and Israeli environments conditions that embarrassed the radicals and compelled them, whether convinced or forced, to proceed to the negotiations table.

There is no doubt that all parties to the conflict were eager to demonstrate flexible and positive stances while hoping that barriers will be created by the other side. Yitzhaq Shamir's government agreed to President Bush's initiative. But to obstruct the initiative, this government attached to it conditions about which the least that can be said is that they are debilitating conditions, realizing that no Arab could accept those conditions and no foreign country, not even the United States, was willing to adopt or relish them. At the first Madrid conference session, Shamir released the slogan of "peace for peace" whereas the U.S. initiative called, with international support, for another slogan, namely "peace for land" in implementation of UN resolutions, especially Security Council Resolution 242.

When the conference activities started, Shamir followed this statement with a more defiant statement, saying that he would withdraw from the conference if the Arabs demanded the principle of "land for peace" or a return to the 1967 borders.

The clouds of pessimism which hung over the Madrid conference as a consequence of the negative and intransigent Israeli position motivated the U.S. mediator to cling to his positions and to mobilize new capabilities for the success of his initiative while fully realizing the extent of the political and psychological difficulties obstructing the path to the desired peace.

There is no doubt that the Labor Party's success in Israel's legislative elections has scattered, to a degree, these clouds of pessimism. Yitzhaq Rabin waged the election campaign under the slogans of "yes to negotiations with the Arabs" and "yes to land for peace." This initiative was not a reaction on his part to his adversary, the Likud Party, but an initiative based on his conviction that it is necessary to lead Israel out of the stifling economic crisis it was experiencing and out of a worrying political condition in which its relations with the United States were worsening as a result of Shamir's rejection of the U.S. request that construction of settlements in the occupied territories be halted—rejection that motivated President Bush to refuse to grant the Jewish state a guaranty for an \$10 billion loan from U.S. and European banks.

The first visit Rabin made to the Untied States was intended to heal the rift between the two countries, to restore trust between them, and to demonstrate goodwill to the U.S. president on the eve of the presidential election. The visit accomplished its objectives and Rabin got the U.S. military and financial aid he demanded, including the \$10-billion loan guaranty. With this display of sympathy toward the Jewish state, it seemed to Bush that he achieved what he aspired for, namely to please the Jewish lobby groups and to gain the votes of those sympathizing with them.

We cannot deny that the statements in which Rabin and Shimon Peres, his foreign minister, declared Israel's wish to embrace a realistic policy that seeks to bridge the gap between the Middle East countries and peoples and to create in the region the peace conditions for which the region aspires reinforced the confidence of the delegations participating in the negotiations.

As for the Arab position, it supported the U.S. initiative from the start. This position became more positive when the Arab became convinced of the U.S. resolve to back up the peace process and when Israel declared that it was going to deal with the Arab demands seriously.

At the Palestinian level, a resolution by the PNC [Palestine National Council] session that convened in Algiers on 29 October 1991 supported the negotiations and approved of the broad lines of the U.S. initiative. It is indubitable that this position was a consequence of the serious developments experienced by the Arab region in wake of the Gulf war and the big changes in the international conditions after the collapse of the Soviet Union

and the fragmentation of its empire into numerous countries that were left with very little influence in the Middle East, not to mention influence on the internal Palestinian situation. This position was also a result of conviction among the PNC members that the intifadah could not destabilize the Israeli security situation and that the Israeli people had begun to adapt to the intifadah and to live with it as a fait accompli which cannot be overcome with military means. Add to this the chronic ailment from which the PLO has been suffering for two decades, namely its division into numerous organizations that agree at times and that disagree among themselves very often. This has paralyzed the PLO and weakened confidence in it.

Perhaps the most serious development the PLO has faced in its Arab relations was its abandonment of the neutral position that it had established as the top constant in its policy. Its wager on Iraq when it invaded Kuwait ruined its relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and with the other gulf states. Consequently, it lost the big financial aid which had been given to it generously by those states.

Washington exploited the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the PLO's former ally, from the international arena to impose its viewpoint, even its conditions, for the negotiations. The Palestinian side had no option but to accept the fait accompli. Ilyas Furayj, Bethlehem's mayor, clarified the new Palestinian position by saying: "The Palestinian people have begun to believe that they will not win a military war and that the conditions favor Israel which can build settlements and create new conditions. Therefore, the only solution is to hold direct negotiations."

Despite the Palestinian rejectionist fronts' objection to the U.S. initiative, a public opinion poll in Palestine has shown that 65 percent of the Palestinian citizens support the negotiations while acknowledging that the path is long and that the projected phased and programmed solutions, which are very akin to the solutions offered by the Camp David accord, are subject to political fluctuations and their outcome is not certain.

But hasn't experience taught us that the projection of ambiguous and complex solution is, at times, the best realistic inlet to releasing a creative dynamic and creative activity that is likely, if it is well-intentioned, to produce positive solutions to these dilemmas. But we must hasten to say that this criterion is not fundamental in politics. The premeditated ambiguity in Resolution 242, for example, has resulted in numerous complications. But the 1967 conditions are what motivated the Security Council to adopt that resolution even though the council was aware of its ambiguity and contradictions.

As for Syria, the matter is no less complex. Syria is indisputably right in its determination to regain the Golan in its entirety because it is an indivisible part of its national soil and because it is within its internationally-acknowledged borders. Restoring the Golan to Syria falls

within the framework of implementing the resolutions the United Nations has adopted and has repeatedly reaffirmed in this regard since 1967.

Syria considers itself the vanguard of the Arab struggle, leading supporter of the Palestinian right at home and abroad, and spearhead of the liberation battle. In the past, Syria based its policy on rejecting separate negotiations with the Arab countries. It insisted that the negotiations be conducted by a unified Arab delegation representing all the [Arab] parties to the conflict. Syria fears that independent negotiations will be another aspect of the Camp David process, which isolated Egypt for a while from the other Arab countries. As a result, the Arab ranks were weakened vis-a-vis Israel, and the strategic imbalance between the Arabs and the Jewish state was entrenched. President Hafiz al-Assad has long called for this balance and has sought it and worked for it within the framework of the Arab group and independently.

But the Soviet Union's collapse and the profound developments that have occurred in the systems of the East Europe countries, all of which were previously Damascus' ally and its main source of weapons, motivated Syria to modify its foreign policy. In this context, Syria supported Kuwait in the Gulf war and agreed to President Bush's initiative after it had explained in successive memoranda its concept of peace based on a just and comprehensive solution and on Israel's withdrawal from all the Arab territories it occupied in 1967.

It is indubitable that confining weapon stores to the United States, Israel's strategic ally, has compelled Syria to realize the serious and delicate nature of the situation, which is something that Iraq did not realize when it invaded Iraq, believing, wrongly, that it could rely on the Soviet Union even though the Soviet Union was drowned at the time in its political and ideological problems and floundering in a stifling economic crisis.

Since the start of negotiations, Syria has demonstrated realism in dealing with Israel, has sat with it face to face for the first time ever, and has expressed its willingness to conclude a peace treaty and to normalize relations within the framework of the UN resolutions on restoring the occupied territories to their owners and recognizing the Palestinian people's full rights.

The position of Rabin's government has encouraged the Syrian government to adopt these pragmatic positions. Saudi Arabia has also played a fundamental role in urging Damascus and the other Arab countries to embrace positive stances in the negotiations.

Nobody can guarantee the outcome of the ongoing talks in the negotiations hall and among the higher circles in the U.S., European, and Arab capitals, and it is not clear how prepared is Rabin to respond to the paper presented by the Syrian delegation for discussion in September 1992. There is no doubt that Syria, which has been

toughened by the experiences of dealing with the Jewish state for more than four decades, would not have entered this tunnel if it had not been convinced that end-of-the-20th-century world began to change when Gorbachev released the principles of perestroika that demolished the Communist system in the Soviet Union and East Europe. Since then, the United States has figured as the indisputable master in the international arena. The key to the Golan is in the U.S. hands today, and the Washington administration is fully convinced that this area does not have the strategic role about which Israel likes to talk. The Gulf war has demonstrated how sophisticated air forces, other weapons of destruction, and long-range missiles have become and how accurate they are, no matter where they are deployed. We should not forget that Iraqi missiles hit Israel itself, traveling a distance of 1,700 km from their launching centers, not to mention the Golan, which is no more than a few kilometers from the center of the battle.

But since Egypt's departure from the Arab-Israeli conflict arena, the United States has held the belief that Syria has an important role in the region, that it has its weight and influence in the peace process, and that, consequently, the United States cannot ignore this weight and this influence. It is feared that Washington will try to pressure Syria to make it conclude a separate treaty that opens a new page in the region's history.

As for Jordan, the peace process assumes other dimensions. Amman has a major role during and after the peace process as a result of conviction among all parties concerned that establishing a federation or a confederation between Jordan and the Palestinian West Bank is vital to both sides and to the future of peace in the region.

Even though Jordan has no immediate demand in these negotiations, its role is fundamental in the forthcoming self-rule phase, which could last three or more years.

There remains the problem of Lebanon. In my opinion, this is the easiest problem, unless Lebanon is confronted with Israel's ambitions to expand within its internationally-recognized borders. In this regard, we note with satisfaction the statements of Israeli officials, such as Rabin, Lubrani, and others, that "Israel has no expansionist ambition in Lebanon's territories." If these statements reflect Israel's true official position, then the Lebanese problem will be confined to border security matters, the same as it is between all countries that have common borders.

But if the Jewish state has ambitions in Lebanon's waters, then the issue will take another course and, consequently, complications will develop and will drag the negotiations to distant and dark labyrinths.

It is worth noting that Israel, which has been controlling these water sources directly or indirectly since 1978, continues to have a vague position on these sources.

What the press has reported about forceful diversion or pumping activities by the occupation forces is still under investigation.

We believe that there is no water problem between Lebanon and Israel. Lebanon's waters are internal waters that spring, run, and terminate within Lebanon's territories. Consequently, they are not international in any way, excluding the waters that emanate in Lebanon and terminate in al-Hulah, such as al-Hasbani River, for example. Israel has controlled the main part of these waters, and the Lebanese negotiator must demand that this issue be examined in accordance with the provisions of international laws.

It must be emphasized here that Lebanon is in dire need of its internal waters, which are barely enough to implement the drainage and irrigation projects that have been drawn up by successive Lebanese governments since independence. These waters are of maximum importance because of the economic development that is experienced by Lebanon and because of the big population explosion which makes the State of Lebanon in the direst need to implement new agricultural, housing, and irrigation projects in order to avoid the consequences of this growth, especially in the south.

Another extremely complex issue in the Lebanese-Israeli negotiations is the resettlement issue. Lebanon, with its small area, its big population growth, its social conditions, and the special delicate circumstances engulfing these conditions in particular, is incapable of withstanding the consequences of the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians.

This is why we have been eager to see the Lebanese negotiator rise to the level of the responsibility falling on its shoulders. Fateful issues depend on this negotiator's position in the negotiations. We wonder: Under the current conditions, i.e., a weak position and the current division experienced by the State of Lebanon, to what degree can the Lebanese negotiator guarantee Lebanon's firm right to its borders and waters and to a secure future for its citizens?

The peace Lebanon aspires for is a peace founded on sovereignty, independence, and the Lebanese people's absolute right to self-determination in total freedom from all foreign domination and pressure, no matter its source. Implementing UN Security Council Resolutions 425 and 520 constitutes the fundamental inlet to accomplishing these objectives.

The Arab-Israeli negotiations are still moving slowly, and the objectives of Israel's policy have not become clear. We do not believe that the U.S. elections will change anything in the scheme that Israel seeks to implement in the region in the next 10 or 20 years. Israel's success or failure depends on the unity of the Arab ranks—a unity that we have long aspired for and sought. Only unity of the Arab ranks can win in the negotiations, regardless of how complex they become. Developments have taught us that Israel's strength lies in

Arab division, and this division is the main reason for the weakness that dominates the body Arab.

We greatly hope that Moroccan King Hassan II's visit to the Arab East countries in these particular days will create in the Arab family a new condition that will give the Arab negotiator momentum, of which he is in the direst need. The Moroccan monarch's successive meetings with King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, make us believe that a new condition will develop in the Arab world to repair the damage caused recently.

The peace process has never been an easy proposition. At a time when the negotiations go on in Washington, we feel that the parties concerned are making military preparations that reflect lack of confidence. Last week, the press came out with the report that Israel was distributing gas masks to its citizens. We have also read that Syria continues to strengthen its military forces and to import weapons from Korea and others. Iran is doing the same, buying heavy weapons and submarines.

All of this does not make us pessimistic or desperate. Perhaps the region's countries are influenced by the famous Roman proverb: "If you want peace, make ready for war." But what we aspire for is a just, fruitful, and constructive peace, not an armed peace.

Islamic Group Leader Fathi Yakan Interviewed
93AE0117C Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19 Sep 92 p 3

[Interview With Fathi Yakan, Islamic Group Secretary General, by Raghib Jabir in Dayr 'Ammar; date not given: "Yakan: Lebanon Not Ready for Islamic State; Islamic Legislation Applicable by Persuasion, Not Force"]

[Text] Who is Lebanon's Islamic Group, and what is its political plan? Is it, as some see it, the radical wing in Lebanon's Islamic movement, or has it become a part of the country's political life?

Is it a part of the Muslim Brotherhood movement, or is it the Sunni face of Hizballah? What is its political, popular, and jurisprudential position, and how does it manage its relations with the other parties? Moreover, does its accession to the parliament justify the apprehensions of some Christians?

These and numerous other questions are raised in the arena now that three of the group's candidates won in the elections. Two of them, Dr. Fathi Yakan and attorney As'ad Harmush, pierced the broad coalition list in the north, and Dr. Zuhayr al-'Ubaydi has won in Beirut.

AL-SAFIR has taken these questions to Dr. Fathi Yakan, the Islamic Group secretary general, at his home in Dayr 'Ammar, and interviewed him far from the clamor of congratulatory receptions and the concerns of organizational affairs, even though the interview was not free of some interruption during which opinions were expressed

on some issues or instructions were given to follow up on some affair. However, everything in the place and its vicinity gave the impression of discipline, organization, and division of work. Perhaps these are the same reasons that led to the success of the group's election campaign and to the election of its candidates.

[Jabir] To begin, who is the Islamic Group?

[Yakan] The Islamic Group came into existence in the early 1950's. Initially, it operated through the Islamic Noble Characteristics Society and then through the Society of Servants of the Compassionate. The entity known as the Islamic Group came into existence in the 1970's.

The Islamic Group has its political plan in Lebanon and whoever acquaints himself with this plan finds that the group's approach to the Lebanese entity, with its diversity, is a farsighted and rational approach because plans cannot be tackled in the same way in all countries. The way the Islamic plan is tackled in a country like Algeria, which has its special characteristics, cannot be the same as it is tackled in Lebanon, with its special characteristics. The Islamic plan in Iran, Sudan, or Afghanistan cannot be tackled the same way as in Lebanon, considering that we are required to appreciate the others' presence and opinions. This is why the Islamic plan for Lebanon is greatly different from the other plans. However, the plan for Lebanon penetrates deep into Lebanon's structure with a qualitative projection, which, in my opinion, is capable of bringing about a qualitative leap, whether in the legislative authority, the executive authority, or the various political, economic, and other aspects of Lebanon's life.

Relationship With Brotherhood

[Jabir] What form did the relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood take originally? Were you inspired by the brotherhood or was it a different kind of relationship?

[Yakan] Because the Muslim Brotherhood was the Islamic movement which renewed intellectual projection as of the 1940's, there is no doubt that the group, which emerged in the 1950's, had to be influenced by that serious and organizational [haraki] projection, regardless of whether it wanted it or not. However, the plans remained regional in nature and our plan in Lebanon continues to be a regional plan. We are the ones who determine what we deem to be fit regarding this plan.

[Jabir] You have not been a part of the brotherhood's international organization?

[Yakan] We take part in numerous conferences that are attended by the international organization.

[Jabir] Do you participate in your capacity as a member of the organization?

[Yakan] We attend the conferences. To date, there is no international membership in an international organization in every sense of the word. But there are conferences

in which all Islamic movements and forces, including the Muslim Brotherhood in particular, get together. But everybody has his regional plan. We may meet within the framework of a general policy, such as the international [peace] conference issue, for example.

Elections

[Jabir] Let us get to the present, and to the elections issue specifically. How do you interpret the election of Islamists, and the Islamic Group especially, to the parliamentary assembly?

[Yakan] The group, like any movement that has its plans, objective, and daily activity, has to set its course in its country. We determined our action plan for our country when the movement came into existence. We have dealt politically within the bounds of the political ceiling established in Lebanon. We rush no cards and no phases but let them come in their own good time.

The world has experienced fundamental developments recently, the most significant of which has been the fall of the leftist, Marxist, and communist philosophy and, consequently, of other projections tied to or emanating from this philosophy in our Arab or Islamic world, including Lebanon. In Lebanon, hundreds of tendencies and movements were formed around, emanated from, and were generated by this philosophy in a manner unprecedented in the Arab region.

There is no doubt that in wake of the collapse of the eastern camp and its satellites, a void developed at a time when the Islamic arena was in the beginnings of its vigorous upsurge through the projections existing at the time in Iran, Sudan, Afghanistan, Algeria, and in most Arab and Islamic countries. A void cannot persist. It has to be filled. No force, philosophy, tendency, or ideology other than Islam and the Islamic ideology was prepared to fill this void. This is why we find that the Islamic tendency has moved to the legislative decision-making positions, not just in Lebanon but also in most Arab and Islamic countries, to fill the void created by the departure of the pan-Arab socialist philosophy from the arena. When the turn of Lebanon's Islamic tendency came, this tendency did no more than assimilate what was happening in the Arab arena.

This is why we moved forth to fill the developing void and to get to the legislative position. We believe that legislative positions were confiscated from the Islamic tendency originally with the collapse of the caliphate, and I do not say this from a sectarian position. The objective of regaining some legislative positions is not to usurp other people's rights but to share the decision-making.

[Jabir] There is Christian and western apprehension about the Islamists' entry into the parliament. What is the way to scatter these apprehensions and to reassure the fearful who see in this entry a threat to the "charter" and to democracy?

[Yakan] We have said that our political and election programs are clearcut because they have not really emanated from a sectarian basis but from fundamental principles which everybody can share with us. We do actually view these principles as constants. The first of these principles begins with developing the Lebanese citizen. The main victim in Lebanon is the citizen. We want to develop this citizen completely. As we want to secure this citizen's physical needs, we also want to secure for him his mental and intellectual needs.

[Jabir] But you want to develop a Muslim citizen.

[Yakan] To begin, we want to develop a citizen who believes in God. We can then consider legislation based on God's words, may He be praised: "Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but God" [Koran 3:64]. It is my belief that religious thought is the inlet to relaxation in the world. The current turmoil in the world, whether in the United States, Europe, or other parts of the world, and the anxiety that is overwhelming mankind can only be eliminated with the revival of religious thinking, i.e., transcendental thinking in the sense of reassurance about the presence of a creator for this universe—revival not from a sectarian perspective but from a human perspective and from a general religious perspective. All religions agree on the idea of divinity and deity.

[Jabir] How do you reconcile the call for abolishing sectarianism with the revival of religious thinking?

[Yakan] Our concept of Islam is that it is not ecclesiastical, meaning that it does not call for separating state and church and does not advocate secularization. Islam believes that the state should derive its guidance and legislation, not to say its power, from God. A house of worship must belong to God. In Islam, there is no such thing as government belongs to the ruler or the sultan and religion belongs to God. This concept does not exist. This is why our thesis is that the religious philosophy from which the people and the ruler derive their guidance must come from God. The same goes for the political philosophy applied to the state. It must not be nonreligious. Rather, it must be inspired by all religions. This is why the proposal to abolish political sectarianism is compatible with the first concept [separation of state and church] whereas the religious philosophy means abolishing all sects, the return of religions to their initial positions, and letting political life be handled by those who are qualified to handle it.

[Jabir] Is this a call for the congruence of religions?

[Yakan] Yes, for dialogue among religions so that a single mainstay of faith can be developed. I believe that the world, with the problems it is experiencing, needs a certain religious effusion that ties it to its Creator. There is a spiritual void. Why is religious nourishment discarded and physical nourishment given priority?

Islamic Legislation

[Jabir] Will you try to issue Islamic laws?

[Yakan] We do actually seek to proceed from our laws to alternatives that can ensure justice and equality in the Lebanese society, but not sectarian laws. We seek laws with a pure Islamic legislative character. We urge all to examine Islamic legislation in all fields from a scientific angle, not from a sectarian angle.

[Jabir] Do you see that Islamic legislation is applicable in Lebanon?

[Yakan] It is applicable everywhere. But this cannot be done overnight. Persuasion is required for any legislation because legislation cannot be applied by force. Therefore, a transitional period is required in order to compare Islamic legislation with other laws.

[Jabir] In the parliament, there will be deputies from all sects and political tendencies. How will you deal with this mix?

[Yakan] In our entry into the assembly, we will proceed from our primary position as advocates of benevolence, of rescuing the country, and of whatever ensures equality, freedom, and justice. Our hands are, of course, extended to everybody. Whoever examines our plan finds that our door is open to cooperation with all parties in the arena, be they Christian or Muslim. But from the position of preachers, we urge everybody to cooperate within a complete parliamentary coalition. We wish for consensus on a single parliamentary bloc that works for the country's interest so that we will not fall into the trap of government and opposition. We hope that all possess the will for change and that they will launch the change, beginning with the policies and laws that will be promulgated by the legislative assembly to deal with all issues, especially with the issue of livelihood [or employment, al-hayatiyah], which is almost crushing Lebanon.

[Jabir] Your projection agrees with the projections of the advocates of secularism. So do you still maintain your position of total rejection of secularization?

[Yakan] If secularization is meant in the Western sense of the concept that has been practiced by France and some Western countries before and since the French revolution, i.e., in the sense of separating church and state, in the sense of rendering unto "Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's," or in the sense that God has no business interfering in people's life and affairs, then we are opposed to secularization, of course. But if secularization is intended to mean a scientific approach to issues and combining a scientific attitude with religious values, then we are for such secularism because to us, religion is founded on science basically and science is based on religion.

[Jabir] Where do you stand vis-a-vis the plan for an Islamic state?

[Yakan] To us, an Islamic state is the objective of all Muslims throughout the world. It is in the phase of realization in this age. Lebanon is not ready to be an Islamic state now. We hope that the Lebanese brothers will understand one day what Islamic legislation is and what this legislation seeks.

[Jabir] How do you evaluate your relations with the other Islamic parties, especially with Hizballah and SIPP [Society of Philanthropic Projects], and is there jurisprudential disagreement between you and SIPP?

[Yakan] From the angle of relations with the various factions in the Lebanese arena, I believe that the Islamic Group is the party most open to everybody, without exception, in the Islamic arena and in the national arena. The group's history has seen numerous phases of coordination and cooperation with all the Islamic circles in Tripoli, Beirut, and Sidon. The group has also formed Islamic committees in which all Islamic factions have been represented. But this does not mean that no disagreement exists. However, the disagreements amount to no more than disagreements on details which do not reach the extent of creating barriers and hostilities. Inversely, the principles and common denominators uniting us with the various Islamic factions, such as the Sufists, the Islamic Reformists, the Conveyance Society, and al-Tahrir [Liberation] Party, are much more numerous. The same goes for our brothers in Hizballah. Our relations with them are profound and deep-rooted, and they are tied to confronting the imperialist U.S.-Zionist scheme. These relations started with the Islamic revolution's victory in Iran and through the Islamic resistance in Lebanon. We also agree with Hizballah on numerous constants.

[Jabir] Does this mean that you are closer to Hizballah?

[Yakan] The relations that have existed and that will be developed in Lebanon in the near future between us and Hizballah will be strong, well-studied, and deep relations, not superficial or spontaneous relations, because they have their plan and we have ours.

Our relations with the other factions are also good. As for our relations with our brothers in the SIPP, we hope that their relations with the Islamic arena will be nothing but the relations of one brother with another. I hope that the coming days will push the SIPP deep into the Islamic arena so that it will be one of the Islamic societies that cooperate with each other in the entire Islamic arena. I would like to note that the brothers in the SIPP may disagree in some of the legal religious opinions and jurisprudential judgments they adopt with the opinions and judgments the Sunna and the group have unanimously embraced throughout history. I hope that a conference of jurisprudence ulema will be held to discuss the opinions expressed and settle this argument between the SIPP on the one hand and the Lebanese Sunna ulema and official religious authorities on the other hand.

Then, what the Sunna and the group's ulema and jurisprudents agree on can be adopted and what contradicts what is customary and well known must be discarded.

On the other hand, I hope that the Islamic arena, of which we and the SIPP are a part, will embrace nothing but the method of intellectual dialogue, that we will steer this arena clear off violent and armed physical conflict, and that we will spare the mosque in particular such a conflict.

[Jabir] It is said that the new Chamber of Deputies will sign the likely accord between Lebanon and Israel?

[Yakan] We know how to say no to what we do not approve of and yes to what we approve of. Within the Chamber of Deputies, we will continue to refuse to sign any bilateral or multilateral agreement with the Zionist enemy. We even refuse to terminate the state of war between the Arabs and Israel and refuse to cede a single grain of Palestine's soil.

Curriculum Vitae of Islamic Group Leader Yakan

93AE0117D Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 19 Sep 92 p 3

[Article: "Fathi Yakan"]

[Text] Born in Tripoli in 1933 to a family of Turkish extraction (Yakan means "son of the sultan's maternal aunt"). The family patriarch disagreed with the sultan, and so the family fled to Aleppo and Tripoli.

He has a degree in electronic engineering and a doctorate in Islamic studies and Arabic.

He is married and has one son, six daughters, and 11 grandchildren.

He joined political life in the 1940's.

He started writing in the 1950's and published a book titled *The Message of Pan-Arabism* in 1958. He has authored nearly 20 books, including *The Palestinian Issue From an Islamic Perspective* and *The Lebanese Issue From an Islamic Perspective*. In the latter, he calls for a gradual meeting between Lebanon and the greater Syria countries as a whole, i.e., for some sort of a phased merger until fundamental merger is accomplished. His latest book, titled *International Development and the Islamic Role*, is in the process of being printed.

Society of Islamic Philanthropic Projects Viewed

93AE0117B Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 10 Oct 92 p 3

[Article by Muna Sukkariyah: "Habashis: Who Are They, How Do They Think, and What Is Their Way?"]

[Text] The yard in front of the mosque was crowded with dozens of women wearing embroidered and colorful clothing, including some dressed in the latest fashion, but their heads were uniformly covered in white. A head covered in black or a bare head was a rarity among them.

Other colleagues carrying the same uniform were crowded inside the [mosque's] vast hall, which seemed to be too narrow for their numbers. They had come to fulfill the wish of listening and "learning the way and seeing the shaykh."

The women present were divided among two generations: A young generation below or close to the age of 20 and a generation of over 60.

The two generations sat on their chairs, and all shared a smile reflecting a great degree of delight. The faces awaiting the shaykh's arrival looked radiant. As soon as the shaykh arrived, the women applauded loudly and followed their applause with ululations. At the main gate, the more faithful among them reached out to touch the man entering in his African robe for blessing. Others yearned to do the same, but it seemed like an impossible task because so many women were jammed in lines behind each other.

All efforts to make the women stop talking failed, thus motivating one of them to yell loudly: "Hush, women," and urge an ulema to use a loudspeaker to ask for silence.

A number of young men watched the situation alertly to secure conditions befitting the lecturer. Before starting his lecture, the lecturer asked the women who had not performed the penance prayer to do so "immediately" and before the lecture was delivered because the [Sufist] "way of life requires it."

Many of the women had their pens and papers to take notes with and others brought their recorders to save time and to learn more of the subject. From time to time, ululations interrupted the silent "Sufi" atmosphere.

Between a large number of recorders and sound and picture control equipment, a Japanese-made video camera was recording Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Harari al-Habashi's lecture on a topic developed by a Sufist movement hundreds of years ago.

In a Somali uniform that looked as if it had just arrived from Mogadishu, Shaykh al-Habashi, who rarely appears in public, sat on his chair after receiving a kiss on his right hand from Deputy Dr. 'Adnan al-Tarabulsi. He spoke Arabic. He has a curly gray beard, and he wore a white "skullcap." The face, with its African color, looked prominent between the gray beard and the white "skullcap."

The Habashis

The al-Habashi Movement, the al-Habashi Group, or the al-Ahbash are different names of the same organization. These names have been reiterated in Beirut in recent years and have been engulfed in an ambiguity dictated by this movement's confidentiality. Rumors have been spread about the movement by people who are not knowledgeable about the movement's affairs and who do not know anything about it. It has been characterized as "traditionalist" and "fundamentalist" because some of

its followers hold some fantastic convictions, such as the need to use domestic soap only and to avoid foreign-made soap.

With the election of Dr. 'Adnan al-Tarabulusi, an al-Habashi Group candidate, to the parliament, the light has been refocused on this group, and numerous questions have been raised about these people: Who are they? What do they think about? Who do they follow? Who is Shaykh al-Habashi? Where did he come from, and why has he settled in Beirut and not elsewhere? These questions followed one another in rapid succession when Shaykh al-Habashi himself appeared before the media cameras, keeping in mind that he had aroused numerous questions by staying out of sight.

Society of Projects

The Society of Islamic Philanthropic Projects is the name under which al-Habashi Group operates. This society was founded nearly 50 years ago with the efforts of Shaykh Ahmad al-'Ajuz. It was headed by Mustafa al-Ghalayini, then al-'Ajuz, and then Shaykh Nizar al-Halabi in 1983.

The society is engaged in charitable activities. It has clinics; it helps the poor and offers free education at the schools it has founded. It also works to build and restore mosques, and it contributes to health education campaigns. This is in addition to scouting, athletic, and women's activities. The society also publishes MANAR AL-HUDA [Lighthouse of Right Guidance].

Under Shaykh al-Halabi, the society has established branches in the districts of Shuhaym, Tarabulus [Tripoli], al-Rawdah (al-Biqa'), Ba'labakk, and Sayda [Sidon]. The society also has a presence outside Lebanon, i.e. in some Arab and foreign countries.

A society official has denied that their tendency is organizational or partisan in character, saying, "We are not a faction isolated from the people. We are a Muslim faction that works to spread the faith from the sources in which we believe, namely the books of ancient ulema such as Abu-Hanifah, Ahmad Bin-Hanbal, al-Shafi'i, and others. We derive our religious ideas from the Koran, the Sunna, the nation's consensus, and analogy."

Guaranty of Moderation

The Habashis deny that they are fanatic because of the location of their institutions, saying that the "war imposed itself on the citizens, and it has resulted in this geographic situation which is beyond our control. Therefore, we are not fanatic in the sense of harboring malice toward others. As for fanaticism in the sense of religious commitment, we are committed religiously." The Habashis, like the other religious and partisan movements, do not forget to acknowledge the special character of multisectarian Lebanon, which "does not belong to the Christians alone or to the Muslims alone. We are the guaranty of moderation in this country," as one of their officials has put it. "Our field of action serves the

country and contributes to rebuilding it. As for trying to establish an Islamic republic, such a quest is far from this country's given facts." [Words missing] to the extent that what it works for and what it works with are inseparable. The Habashi Group's denial that the group seeks to engage in political action has been crowned with the election of one of their elements to the parliamentary assembly. They define politics as a "concept of services." As for being tied to this or that government, "We are nothing of the sort."

As for "entering the government, it is an extension of a field in which we have already worked and it falls within the sphere of contributing to building our country and working to develop it. Our objective in the parliament is the same as our objective outside the parliament. We are opposed to the politicization of Islam, i.e. opposed to the violence employed by the Muslim Brotherhood in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, and elsewhere."

For al-Habashi Group, weapons are for defending one's self, kinsmen, and country and "military action is for serving the national interest. Armed action is for confronting the Zionist occupation, especially if Israel refuses to implement Resolution 425. Then, resistance will be our option, but behind the Lebanese Army."

The Habashis boast of their contribution to defending the steadfastness of "their Beirut" during the 1982 Israeli invasion "without losing any martyrs on our part." They underline their defense of Lebanon's Arab identity and say that "nobody can stand neutral between an Arab Lebanon and a Zionized Lebanon."

They have their own political rhetoric, even though they insist that they act within the religious framework only. They are committed to their ideas, regardless of whether these ideas concern relations with Syria, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizballah, the Sufist woman's veil, or other issues.

Shaykh Husam Qaraqirah, the Habashi vice chairman who studied Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Habashi's teachings upon graduating from the Manbij Institute (near Aleppo), has said, "we have problems with nobody other than the Muslim Brotherhood. Our disagreement is a profound ideological religious disagreement. The Brotherhood's religious concept is corrupt, and we consider it most dangerous because it is destructive, it views [some] Muslims as infidels, and it relies on violence in its political activity. The Brotherhood's history is dark and filled with coups and assassinations, as attested by the Brothers' files and by the interrogations conducted with them."

The disagreement is so deep that the Habashis and the Muslim Brotherhood cannot meet.

Qaraqirah went on to add: "We work to disseminate the concepts of the orthodox faith without any impurities and without injecting partisan ideas into them. The pure faith is faith presented by the ulemas' books and by the nation's consensus. In this sense, we have a fundamental,

and not superficial, disagreement with the Muslim Brotherhood's philosophy, which relies on what Sayyid Qutub said in the early 1960's. In Qutub's opinion, rulers who employ positive law to rule, even on a single issue, are infidels, even if their ruling does not contradict the Koran. In this sense, statesmen are also infidels. Qutub held the opinion that peoples who want to safeguard their Islam must abandon their countries, which he viewed as land of infidelity, to other lands that are not lands of infidelity or of war or they must rebel against their governments. Else, the peoples too become infidel.

"This principle, which was launched by Sayyid Qutub and in which he distorted the meaning of the Koran's verses, contradicts the true faith of Muslims. As a consequence of Qutub's interpretation, which contradicts the Koran, an organizational movement known as the Islamic Organization came into existence, and this organization has caused unrest in more than one country, beginning with what it did in the days of the late Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir and what it did in Syria and ending with what is occurring in Algeria currently."

"We believe that the shari'ah does not support their words, and this is why we disagree fundamentally with the Muslim Brotherhood and those who support it."

And who are those who support it? Qaraqirah responded: "The Muslim Brotherhood goes under several names, including the Islamic Group in Lebanon (which has three deputies, namely Fathi Yakan, As'ad Harmush, and Zuhayr al-'Ubaydi). We have ideological religious disagreement with it. There is also the international Muslim Brotherhood Organization, of which the Islamic Group is a part, and so is Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood and Algeria's FIS [Islamic Salvation Front]."

Brigade, Military Zone Commanders Named

93AE0117A Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 6 Oct 92 p 4

[Article: "Transfers Made To Complete Army Merger, Including Zone and Brigade Commanders"]

[Text] Army Commander General Emile Lahhud has made a number of transfers that affect brigade and military zone commanders in a step intended to complete merging all formations and units.

The transfers were as follows:

- Al-Biq'a District Command: Brigadier General 'Adil Khalil (a Catholic) appointed to replace Staff Brigadier General Yusuf al-Qashsh (a Catholic) as the district commander.
- Al-Janub [Southern] District Command: Brigadier General Salamat Sulayman (a Shiite) in place of Brigadier General Qasim Siblini (a Shi'ite).
- Airport Security Agency: Colonel Ghassan Yamin (a Maronite) in place of Colonel Robert Abu-Jawad (a Maronite).
- Deputy chief of staff for supply: Brigadier General

Yusuf Nujaym (a Maronite) in place of Brigadier General Albert Khuri (a Maronite).

Brigade Commanders:

- 1st Brigade: Colonel Anis Tubiya (an Orthodox) for Colonel Ghassan Mulhim (a Shiite).
- 2d Brigade: Faris Sufiya (a Maronite) in place of Colonel 'Abdallah Dahir (a Sunni).
- 3d Brigade: Colonel Lucien Mukari (a Maronite) in place of Brigadier General 'Adil Khalil (a Catholic).
- 5th Brigade: Colonel Ghassan Mulhim (a Shiite) in place of Colonel Faris Sufiya (a Maronite).
- 6th Brigade: Colonel Charles Tarraf (a Catholic) in place of Colonel 'Isam 'Atawi (a Shiite).
- 7th Brigade: Colonel Ramzi Abu-Hamzah (a Druze) in place of Colonel Lucien Mukari (a Maronite).
- 8th Brigade: Colonel 'Isam 'Atawi (a Shiite) in place of Colonel Charles Tarraf (a Catholic).
- 9th Brigade: Colonel 'Abdallah Dahir (a Sunni) in place of Colonel Ramiz Mansur (a Maronite).
- 10th Brigade: Colonel Ahmad Subrah (a Sunni) in place of Colonel Antonius Sawwan (a Maronite).
- 11th Brigade: Colonel Robert Abu-Jawad (a Maronite) in place of Colonel Ramzi Abu-Hamzah (a Druze).
- 12th Brigade: Colonel Ramiz Mansur (a Maronite) in place of Colonel Ahmad Subrah (a Sunni).

Regiment Commanders:

- Commandos Regiment: Major Narik Ibrahimian, commander.
- 1st Deployment Regiment: Major Mahmud al-Jamal.
- 2d Deployment Regiment: Major Antoine Banu.
- 3d Deployment Regiment: Major Francois al-Hajj.
- 5th (Airborne) Deployment Regiment: Major Jean Qahwaji.

MOROCCO

Polisario Accused of Diverting Aid From Camps

93AF0241B Rabat L'OPINION in French 5 Dec 92 p 3

[Unattributed article: "Polisario' Diversions of Humanitarian Aid Meant for Inhabitants of Tindouf Camps"]

[Text] For several years Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] leaders have been diverting large quantities of the public and private humanitarian aid granted to the inhabitants of the Tindouf camps.

These diversions, ordered by Mohamed Abdelaziz and carried out according to his directives and directions, have led several of the organization's top leaders to tell him that it was unacceptable to continue to use humanitarian aid for his personal enrichment and that diverting a major part of this aid to feed fighting soldiers constituted an abuse of the good faith of the donor humanitarian organizations.

The appeals of these leaders have been in vain.

Indeed, Mohamed Abdelaziz is continuing his policy of diverting humanitarian aid in the following ways:

1. The day-to-day operating expenses of the Polisario's army are completely paid for by humanitarian aid.

2. Hundreds of [metric] tons of provisions, medicines, and durable goods are regularly sold through networks that deal directly with Mr. Mohamed Abdelaziz in the southern part of Algeria (Tindouf, Bechar, Laabdal, Oum Laassel, and Adrar) and the north of Mauritania (Bir Moghrein, Ain Bentili, Lehfira, Zouerat, Nouadhibou, Choum, Atar, and even Nouakchott).

The proceeds from these illegal sales go in two directions:

- they fill the movement's political war chests to support its diplomatic, political, and military program;
- they fill Mohamed Abdelaziz's personal accounts and those of members of his family (who are merchants in Tindouf, Bechar, Oran, and Oum Laaseel) as well as those of other Polisario leaders.

This state of affairs can be checked by investigating in the marketplaces of the above-mentioned Algerian and Mauritanian cities and villages, where the products from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR] and other humanitarian institutions meant for Saharans in the Tindouf camps are a source of happiness to merchants.

Other diversions should be noted:

There is the case of certain sums of cash earmarked by humanitarian organizations for the purchase of fresh meat and/or school and sanitary equipment.

These sums of money are automatically put in Mohamed Abdelaziz's pockets and false invoices are supplied to donors, passed off as expense reports.

How many times have Swedish organizations (Save the Children and the Swedish International Development Authority [SIDA]) sent money in the form of cash or checks to purchase meat and [how many times] has this money never been used for its intended purpose? But in return the donor organizations received false invoices.

Major sums of money meant to build schools or dispensaries have been paid into the coffer of the "Defense Ministry" and in return the Polisario shows donors expensive buildings built by prisoners.

Furthermore the Polisario's diversion of humanitarian aid has been reported on by the Algerian press.

To put an end to such a state of affairs, which has become an essential part of Polisario top-management "morale," the UNHCR should act to take over the direct administration of humanitarian aid distribution.

Indeed, as long as the administration of this aid is in the Polisarios hands, it will continue to handle it in its own

fashion, which is completely contrary to the aim and the motivations of this humanitarian aid.

This means there should be an effective presence of an UNHCR administration of the refugee camps instead of administering this aid from an office in Algiers.

Letter From Mr. Snoussi to the High Commissioner for Refugees

Madam High Commissioner,

Following the instructions of my authorities, I am pleased to send you the enclosed file concerning the disastrous humanitarian situation prevailing in the camps controlled by the Polisario in Tindouf in Algeria.

This document was prepared by the Moroccan Government based on information and testimony supplied by former leaders and members of this movement who have come back to [our] country in recent years.

As you will note, this file essentially examines:

- the systematic diversion of international humanitarian aid by the leadership of the Polisario and in particular the aid supplied by the HCR and nongovernmental organizations;
- the serious violations of human rights in the camps and in particular depriving individuals of their freedom of movement and violations of their person (tortures, liquidations, etc.).

In light of this file, and owing to the rapid deterioration of the situation in the Tindouf camps, the government of the Kingdom of Morocco would like to alert you officially, via this letter, to this highly humanitarian issue and ask you to act immediately to bring a halt to these inhuman actions and ensure the Saharan population of the camps that they will enjoy their basic rights (subsistence, security, freedom of movement, etc.).

To this end, the Moroccan Government wishes to assure you it will cooperate completely and in particular that it will make available to you any document, item of proof or testimony which might facilitate the achievement of your noble mission.

I must also emphasize that the delays, which have occurred in the MINURSO [UN Mission for the Organization of a Referendum in Western Sahara] referendum process in the Sahara, which were delays due basically to the Polisario's unwillingness to implement the settlement plan adopted by the Security Council, have meant that my country is increasingly alarmed about the fate awaiting the innocent population of the Tindouf camps, which the leadership of this movement is maltreating and using as a means to exert pressure on the international community.

I therefore take this opportunity to reiterate that my country believes that urgent action by the High Commissioner for Refugees is necessary to accomplish the following tasks during a first phase:

- take over the direct administration of humanitarian aid distribution in the Tindouf camps;
- Carry out a census of Saharans in the camps to ascertain their numbers and thus prevent precious humanitarian aid from being wasted at a time when other regions of the world, and in Africa in particular, desperately await the arrival of massive amounts of food and urgently needed products (such as Somalia, Liberia or the Sudan);
- Last, in accordance with HCR regulations, ensure for this population that there will be a freely granted right of return, under the protection of the United Nations, or at least the freedom to move and settle in the region or the country of its choice.

Respectfully yours,

Ahmed Snoussi, Ambassador and
Permanent Representative

Cost of Living Index Reportedly Up

*93AF0238B Casablanca LA VIE ECONOMIQUE
in French 13 Nov 92 p 14*

[Article: "Retail Prices: Up 3.9% Since December"; first paragraph is *LA VIE ECONOMIQUE* introduction]

[Text] In September 1992 the cost of living index (covering 210 articles) reached the level of 483.1 points, compared to 479.8 in August 1992, thereby indicating an increase of 0.7 percent. Since the beginning of 1992 there has been an increase of 3.9 percent.

All groups of products went up. In effect the food group price index recorded an increase of 0.8 percent, caused by higher prices in the following subgroups: grains (+0.7 percent), fats (+0.1 percent), meat (+1.7 percent), fish (+5.7 percent), eggs (+13.5 percent), other vegetables (+2.2 percent), fresh fruits (+6.2 percent), dried fruits (+0.4 percent), aromatic plants (+2.1 percent), soda drinks and mineral water (+0.2 percent), other drinks (+3.0 percent), and spices and condiments (+0.2 percent).

The "Housing" group showed an increase of 0.4 percent, as did the index of prices in the following subgroups: rents (+0.2 percent), maintenance and repairs (+0.5 percent), heat, light, and water (+0.9 percent), furnishings and household linens (+0.2 percent), kitchen utensils (+0.5 percent), and household appliances (+0.2 percent).

The "Transportation, Leisure, and Various Other Expenditures" group reflected an increase of 0.7 percent. This is due principally to changes in the cost of private transportation (+0.3 percent), cigarettes (+9.1 percent), durable goods (+0.1 percent), and miscellaneous expenditures (+0.2 percent). The index of the "Clothing" group increased by 0.3 percent. This change reflects an

increase in the prices of outerwear (+0.5 percent), under-clothing (+0.1 percent), and the cost of making clothing (+0.4 percent). Finally, the index of the "Health Care and Services" group also reflected an increase of 0.2 percent, following rises in the cost of health services (+0.3 percent) and medical care (+0.3 percent).

Moreover, we note that the cost of living index (on 210 articles) for September 1992 rose by 3.1 percent, compared to the same month of 1991. Meanwhile, the average index of the first nine months of 1992 reflected an increase of 5.3 percent, compared to the average index for the corresponding period of 1991. Compared to December, the increase was 3.9 percent.

SAUDI ARABIA

France Slated To Complete Navy Sawari-2 Program

*93AE0108A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
27 Oct 92 p 4*

[Article: "Sawari-2 To Complete Saudi Naval Development Program in Cooperation With France"]

[Text] French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe's current visit to Saudi Arabia will certainly lead to agreement on the final details of the important Sawari-2 protocol that is expected to be signed by the two countries to complete the kingdom's years-long program to build and augment its naval forces.

The Sawari-2 protocol will complete the Sawari program. The implementation of this program began in the early 1980's as part of a cooperative agreement between Saudi Arabia and France. The program's first protocol, signed in 1980, was known then as Sawari-1.

Sawari-1 was one of the most important military agreements between France and an Arab nation. Sawari-2 likewise vies for the distinction of being French industry's most important foreign military sale in years. It comes at a critical time for French industry, which has been in a sharp slump lately due to declining sales of arms and supplies to domestic, as well as foreign, markets.

Jacques-Ives Gorkov, president of Sofresa [French Weapons Systems Export Company], a government enterprise responsible for French military exports, disclosed for the first time last week that agreement on the deal with Saudi Arabia was close at hand. Gorkov said that negotiations with Riyadh began prior to the Gulf war. The deal was sidetracked by war and post-war developments and is ready to be signed now that agreement has been reached on the finer points. Sawari-2 is valued at 20 billion francs, or \$4 billion. According to the agreement, Saudi Arabia's Royal Naval Forces are to

receive three frigates equipped with Lafayette-class missiles, as well as appropriate arms and supplies, qualifying and training services, and the necessary infrastructure.

It is not yet known what Arabic appellation the Saudi Navy will give the Lafayette frigates, but they will form the Navy's largest category of main warships. Vessels of that class have a displacement of about 3,600 tons and are equipped with Otomat-class surface-to-surface antinaval missiles with a range of 80 km. They also will be equipped with surface-to-air antiaircraft missiles, most probably of the Crotale-class designated for low- and medium-flying air targets at distances of up to 20 km. It is not unlikely, however, to equip this type of warship with another class of antiaircraft missiles, such as the American Standard-2 missile with a range of 50 km, but the frigates will also be armed with heavy automatic artillery, (M/T) cannons, and pipe torpedoes. Each vessel will carry one antisubmarine, antinaval helicopter, probably of the Dauphin-2 class already in service in the Saudi Navy. Western defense sources said that the French are "particularly pleased" at winning this contract, especially in view of heavy competition from the United States, which offered to supply Riyadh with American-made frigates of the Oliver Hazard Perry class but the Saudis opted for the French warships.

It is to be pointed out that under the \$3 billion Sawari-1 protocol signed in 1980, the Saudi Navy received four missile-equipped frigates of the F-2000 class, known in the Saudi navy as al-Madinah class; two logistic support vessels of the (Durance) class; 24 antisubmarine, antinaval Dauphin-2 helicopters, and the appropriate supplies and logistic services.

The four Saudi vessels of this class are named al-Madinah, al-Hafuf, Abha, and al-Ta'if and are among the most effectual and advanced warships operating in the Middle East. Each has a displacement of 2,650 tons and is armed with Otomat-class antinaval missiles, Crotale-class antiaircraft missiles, one 100-mm cannon, four 40-mm antiaircraft guns, four pipe torpedoes, and one Dauphin-2 helicopter equipped with AS-15 antinaval surface-to-air missiles with a range of 15 km.

By acquiring the French frigates, Saudi Arabia will become the leading naval power in the Gulf and Middle East region. It will boast seven frigates, four Corvette missile escort vessels of the U.S.-made Badr class, and nine offensive-missile launches of the U.S.-made al-Sadiq class, as well as dozens of torpedo and patrol boats, mine sweepers, and assorted transport and support vessels.

Saudi Arabia is also studying the feasibility of equipping its navy with a number of modern offensive submarines. Submarine manufacturers from the United States, France, Britain, and Germany are vigorously competing for this prospective contract, which will likely call for six to eight submarines with a minimum aggregate value of between \$5 and \$6 billion.

The Sawari-2 agreement is expected to be formally signed before work begins on building the three new Saudi frigates. The Saudi Navy is to take delivery of the warships within two years.

SUDAN

Attempts To Improve Relations With UAE

93AF0165B London *AL-HAYAH* in Arabic
1 Nov 92 pp 1, 4

[Article by Mu'awiyah Yasin in London and 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum: "Sudan Seeks To Improve Relations with UAE; Military Opposition Commanders Meet With Garang in the South"]

[Text] The Sudanese ministry of foreign affairs is intensifying efforts to improve Sudanese relations with the United Arab Emirates [UAE]. Khartoum's diplomatic isolation, however, has deepened as a result of Japan's action to suspend nonhumanitarian aid to Sudan. AL-HAYAH learned that four commanders of the Sudanese military opposition, along with a former cabinet minister who resigned some three months earlier, met in southern Sudan with Colonel John Garang, leader of the Popular Army for the Liberation of Sudan.

A Sudanese diplomatic source in Khartoum told AL-HAYAH that the Sudanese Government has directed its newspapers and information media to stop the attacks they have been directing at the UAE since relations between the two countries soured early this year. The source added that Khartoum was informed that the UAE has decided to reciprocate in kind. The UAE, however, has made no official statement to that effect.

AL-HAYAH learned that Khartoum has indicated to the UAE charge d'Affaires in Sudan its desire to increase the level of diplomatic representation. Embassy staffs were reduced as relations between the two countries deteriorated.

In another development, a delegation of the former command of the Sudanese Armed Forces met with Colonel Garang at (Narus), to the south of (Caboyrta) in southern Sudan. The delegation was composed of Field Marshal Ahmad 'Ali, the former commander-in-chief; Field Marshal 'Abd-al-Rahman Sa'id, former deputy chief of staff of the Army; General 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khalid; and General 'Abd-al-Rahman Khawajli, the Sudanese military opposition's representative in Kenya. The meeting was attended by George Kangha [Logokwa], former Sudanese minister of labor who resigned from the cabinet last July and opted to reside in Cairo.

Sources of the Popular Army, which has been fighting Khartoum since 1983, said that Kangha, whom it described as a Garang supporter, has accompanied the former Sudanese soldiers from Cairo to Nairobi and then to the south of Sudan. The sources declined to comment on the issues discussed at the meeting but

Sudanese sources in London said that the delegation of military opposition to the regime of Marshal 'Umar al-Bashir has offered to help Garang in his drive to take the city of Juba, south Sudan's largest city.

AL-HAYAH learned that certain government armed forces officers have stolen out of government-occupied areas to secretly meet with Marshal 'Ali's delegation. Staff General Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Awaydah, official spokesman of the Sudanese Army, told AL-HAYAH in Khartoum yesterday that the army's solidarity will not be affected by any action of the former military commanders.

In yet another development, Sudanese Minister of Finance 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi disclosed that the Japanese government has notified Khartoum of its decision to suspend nonhumanitarian aid to Sudan. Such aid amounted to about \$13 million this year. The minister added that his country views the Japanese action as part of the political pressure directed by the West against Sudan.

Commentary on Government Human Rights Infringements

*93AF0165A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
3 Nov 92 p 14*

[Article by Muhammad al-Hasan in London: "Quality of Life in the Sudan: Front Practices and World Accusations"]

[Text] The most recent punitive action against the Sudanese regime came last week as Japan suspended aid to the Sudan after accusing it of human rights violations. The Sudanese undersecretary of foreign affairs said in an initial official reaction to the Japanese action that it was based on inaccurate information received by Japan from anti-Sudanese sources. He said that the Japanese ambassador in Khartoum could have obtained information more accurate than that obtained by his country from anti-Sudanese propaganda, that Sudan is open to all, and that the government would schedule more meetings in order to explain and rebut accusations of human rights infringements.

It is common knowledge that even though Japan is a major power with great economic clout, it has no imperialistic designs on Sudan. We must therefore attach great significance to its testimony against the Sudanese regime, especially in the realm of human rights. By the same token, we must view with a great deal of suspicion the Sudanese undersecretary's statement that Sudan is open to all and that the government would intensify efforts to refute accusations of human rights violations. Indeed, we do not know exactly what the undersecretary means by "intensifying efforts." What we know for a fact is that he is not telling the truth when he says that Sudan is open to all. It is common knowledge that the Sudanese are denied the freedoms of expression, of organizing, of movement and travel, of work, and of peace and security. It is amazing that the undersecretary would define

for Japan the manner in which it should obtain accurate information and would erroneously suppose that such information was not supplied by the Japanese ambassador in Khartoum. At any rate, before we enumerate instances of human rights violations that are common knowledge throughout the world, it is necessary to present the latest addition to the regime's list of innovations in the area of undermining human dignity in Sudan.

Security agencies have been lying in wait for certain families, descending upon them without warning and in a manner that instills terror. They have sequestered youths and rounded up all those sitting secure in their homes and their clubs. The detainees are then led away and held for the night before they are made to appear early in the morning before summary or emergency courts, where they are indicted on various charges and sentenced primarily to flogging, but they sometimes also receive fines or are sentenced to jail.

The main purpose of all this is to go after political opponents and devise new measures to denigrate them by exploiting religion, as usual, through flawed measures and for nonreligious purposes.

It is indeed astonishing that the regime would enjoy flogging certain people of distinction only in the so-called United Nations Square in the heart of Khartoum, where the whipping is witnessed by the largest possible number of people while regime wallows in its contempt for the UN charter! It is as if the regime seeks by all means to fabricate a conflict between Islam and the UN Declaration on Human Rights, even though Islam forbids spying, surveillance, and entering people's homes without permission. The Front, in its disgraceful desire to exploit Islam for the regime's purposes, considers oppression to be the most straightforward way to impose and consolidate the regime's dominance. Unfortunately, this takes place under the guise of Islam.

The Sudanese capital talks is abuzz with anguish about the staid Khartoum Club, which Sudanese security forces raided one evening and led away dozens of Khartoum's prestigious personalities to appear the following morning before a court that sentenced them to flogging and to fines of 20,000 pounds each. Among the convicted were a respected 70-year-old judge and a well-known physician and former ambassador, who is also in his 70's. The latter addressed the youthful magistrate: "I and the venerable judge are both in our 70's, and our state of health precludes our being flogged, your honor, especially because we have bothered nobody and caused no problem. We were merely sitting at home, as has been our custom for half a century."

The youthful Front magistrate responded: "I would not change the sentence even if I knew for a fact that flogging would cause your demise. I might even conclude that we would be better off with you dead than alive."

The judge then ordered the flogging of those two patriarchs of prestigious Khartoum families, merely because

the families do not subscribe to Front ideology. But the Front has advanced terror a step further into psychological debasement and the demeaning of human dignity, all without shame and in the name of Islam.

In addition, the Front does not respect the laws it promulgates, nor does it use them as a standard of justice. This, in my view, is not surprising because people who corrupt and misuse God's edicts for their own purposes and for certain political gains can be expected to violate even the laws for which they have pressed and to which they have professed commitment. As an example, the regime announced liberalization of the economy and of currency controls, in total reversal of its earlier practices of executing people in the name of Islam merely for holding foreign currency.

A few days ago the regime arrested all, or most of, Khartoum's currency traders, who have since been subjected to all manner of terror and pressure for no fault of their own except that the value of the dollar has risen to more than 150 pounds!

The Front's security forces hauled them to court, but they could not be tried because freedom of commerce implies freedom to trade currency. Yet, security forces would release them only on condition that they sell their dollar holdings to the state at official rates, under pain of imprisonment!

Such disregard for even the laws promulgated by the Front's regime weakens confidence, if not destroying it altogether, and shatters the regime's pretensions of veracity and seriousness in adopting decisions and abiding by them. This, however, is in the character of that dictatorial regime, because it is a regime that seeks to rule with force of arms without the slightest regard even to the laws that it promulgates by virtue of one Islamic fatwa then later rescinds by issuing another. This is exactly what happened when certain individuals were executed for holding currency. It was later decreed that holding currency is in keeping with the Islamic system. Those Machiavellians shamelessly justify whatever objective they want and do not bat an eyelash at retreating from a stand if it serves their purposes.

In view of all that, how dare the foreign undersecretary say that our country is open to those who would want to verify adherence to human rights, then preach a sermon, and invite visits by Japanese leaders? Naturally, I still do not know the manner in which the government will intensify the campaign to justify its misrepresentations and human rights violations.

The regime restricts freedom of movement, even of the movements of citizens of a country like the United States, which is truly upset at the regime's treatment of its relief agencies in the south. The regime restricts U.S. efforts to inspect the relief agencies' sites, ascertain their situation, and satisfy itself as to the security of relief workers, especially because one relief worker was admittedly executed by the regime and another has disappeared and is rumored to have been executed, as well.

A long list can be undoubtedly compiled of human rights violations in Sudan. For examples:

- The regime on 30 June 1989, its first day in power, declared a state of emergency and a curfew that remain to this day. There is no doubt that a state of emergency accompanied by curfew is a most severe curtailment of human rights, even under extraordinary conditions, not to mention for more than three years! At any rate, this is powerful proof of the regime's instability and its lack of acceptance by the people.
- Heading the list of human rights violations are executions without fair trials for political reasons or for currency possession. The most infamous such incident was the slaughter of 28 officers, which took place during Ramadan—the month in which Koran was revealed.
- Unprecedented torture in the capital's "houses of ghosts" [torture chambers] and now in provincial prisons, as well. In Juba, such a facility is called the "White House" because everyone knows that whoever visits there will not be returning. The regime has excelled in demeaning and humiliating such notables as university professors, unionists, officers, and merchants.
- A most serious provocation that incited the world against the regime was the latter's practices and attempts at the forced repatriation of citizens from the capital to the south and to the west, which is viewed as racial discrimination or purges. The world has also been incensed at the harassment of relief agencies by such actions as revoking their work permits, blocking their activities, or restricting their freedom of movement.
- The regime's worst human rights violation in Sudan was the dismissal of thousands of civil and military service personnel, as if Sudan had become the property of the Islamic Front and it alone was entitled to all jobs, to the exclusion of Sudanese who no longer have a right to employment or to life.
- The whole world is aware, of course, of the seizure of the property of opponents of the regime, the confiscation of passports, and the act of preventing families from reuniting with their loved ones in exile. Those suspected of opposing the regime, or rather, of not being loyal to it, are not allowed to travel.
- The worst human rights violation is concealing the famine that threatens 7 million Sudanese, even though this famine can be witnessed on television screens throughout the world. The regime does not merely deny the famine; it contributes to the relief of the needy in other nations! Even worse, the regime is attempting to make secret wheat purchases from Arab countries that it has offended. Suffice it to say that the UN representative in charge of relief efforts in the region has decried the Sudanese regime's food donations and the volume of these donations, describing them as a propaganda effort and akin to the reexportation of UN aid!
- Because the list of human rights violations is long and goes on and on, we conclude by citing international

charges of terrorism and of harboring terrorists. Such a charge, leveled at the regime by international organizations and by more than one Arab state, means that the regime undermines human rights not only in the Sudan, but in other countries, as well. Its alliance with Iran raises numerous questions and doubts.

- This is not to leave out military conscription and the forced return of Sudanese studying in various countries of the world by suspending their subsidies and canceling their missions. These violate human rights, as does the People's Police, which was created by the regime to carry out its anticipated expansion of harassing people by infringing upon their personal freedoms and increased beatings in United Nations Square.

And yet the foreign undersecretary says that the regime will intensify its efforts to rebut accusations. It would have been better for him to say that the regime will review its practices and laws and will pledge to respect human rights. Nothing else will convince anybody that the Sudanese regime nurtures the quality of life of the Sudanese. It will not do the regime any good to claim that it is falsely accused of human rights violations by certain world entities.

TUNISIA

Absence of Effective Opposition Discussed

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[Article by Jacques de Barrin and Michel Deure: "Tunisia: A Monochrome Regime"]

[Text] It was a Jean-Paul Goude-type parade, organized for the purpose of putting into perspective, in the country's three-millennium-long history, the "New Era," whose fifth anniversary Tunisia celebrated on Saturday, 7 November. President Ben Ali, the "man of change," attended the spectacular event held in the Lake district: Tunisia in the year 2000, surrounded by tight security and staged before a hand-picked audience. The panaorama, comprised of 15 tableaux, ended at dusk with a reference to the "malaise created by the long twilight" of Habib Bourguiba, father of independence, and a torchlight celebration of the rebirth of a "democracy of free, adult citizens."

Five years after Ben Ali's "medical coup d'etat," there is still a long way to go. Has the dream vanished? "The fight against fundamentalism has upset the order of things," officials agree in the corridors of power, where it is also said that "the problem is now solved." It was solved in August, when 265 members of the underground al-Nahdah movement were given sentences ranging from one year to life in prison. It was also settled, far more discreetly and after long months, by the arrest of hundreds of suspects having a bone to pick with the courts of summary jurisdiction. A total of nearly 3,000 Islamists—or persons viewed as such—are now behind bars.

"We are still arresting a few fugitives trained in Sudan," official circles report, happy to see former fundamentalist prisoners "admit their mistakes" and "even help gather information." While many Tunisians are willing to credit the government with this crackdown on fundamentalists, achieved without too much fuss, they are nevertheless careful not to declare victory. "We are out of the tunnel, but we could end up back in it at any time," says one professor, citing the dubious battle waged against the "bearded ones" by Algerian and Egyptian authorities, Sudan's proselytizing ("a tool in the hands of Iran") and, above all, the existence in the very heart of the country of underground networks which, claiming to be working for the benefit of prisoners, could maintain contact with those close to them.

Is it a legitimate concern or merely an alibi? Whatever the case, in the political field strictly speaking, the "change" has not yet taken place and, despite official claims, seems to have been postponed indefinitely. Tunisia thus affords the spectacle of a country where Parliament is monochrome, the opposition inconsistent, the unions weak, the media under control, and where the League of Human Rights—the last hope—has apparently ceased to exist legally, ever since the implementation in June of a new law on association.

'Freedom From Years of Frustration'

"The president is aware that political life has broken down," say those determined to give Tunisia a reassuring image. Speaking before the Central Committee of the ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) in mid-October, Ben Ali announced that "the page of extremism has been turned forever" and that a new one was beginning, that of "the achievement of pluralism." However, in a "state-of-the-union"-type speech on Saturday and bursting with smugness, the chief of state offered nothing but generalities except to note that a new type of voting was being worked out in order to promote the emergence of an opposition in the coming Parliament.

"After 30 years of a single-party system, we did not dream that everything would change overnight," says Fatiha Baccouche, deputy from Tunis-Nord, nevertheless admitting that "a monochrome Parliament is difficult to accept." Without truly believing it, there are those in the government who advance the idea that the legislative elections scheduled for 1994 could be moved up a few months and that, thanks to the virtues of a combined system of majority and proportional voting, the opposition could muster enough votes to act as a block in the future Parliament. They even openly dream of a "Chamber in which the deputies' punch will be all the stronger because they will be freeing themselves from years of frustration."

But these are apparently pipedreams. This exercise in the "enrichment of public life" actually seems to have reached its limits very quickly because it fits into the restricting, outmoded framework of a party-state. The

heir to the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD), the old single party, the RCD, which Ben Ali heads, argues its "historic legitimacy." The leaders of the RCD make no secret of their intention, no matter what happens, of continuing to exercise power "comfortably." In Ben Ali's eyes, the opposition's representation in Parliament will have to reflect its real influence in the country. Given the current context, this would indicate no upheaval of the political scene. In the minds of the bosses of the ruling party, their adversaries must be left to "make the most of the remains," obviously recruiting their followers from among the thin ranks of the "eternal malcontents."

Freedom of Expression

None of the six currently recognized opposition groups represents any threat, or even an annoyance, to the government. Many of their leaders have indeed emerged from the same political mold, that of the old single party. Ben Ali and his followers therefore have little to fear from the possible wrong-doings of adversaries who have been somewhat excluded. Did we not recently hear Mohamed Moada, president of the Movement of Socialist Democrats (MDS), enthusiastically applaud the

highly militant speech which the chief of state delivered before the RCD's Central Committee?

No more than the opposition, the media do not provide any useful counterbalance to the voracious appetites of the apostles of "change." The journalists' need to "place the country's higher interest above any other consideration," as Ben Ali observed, barely conceals his concern for providing a framework for freedom of expression. How is one to believe in this "radical change in the media scene" of which the chief of state boasted? Is the personality cult practiced by the people of the press but an ordinary expression of excessive zeal, and the slanderous denunciations of so-called independent newspapers directed toward troublemakers mere sideslipping?

To accomplish anything new with political personnel who essentially served under Bourguiba is a long shot. The fact remains that this ambition to open up areas of freedom also encounters the (not totally futile) obsession of Ben Ali and his people with seeing the "Islamist vermine" get swallowed up in the slightest breach. Is it possible that the government's credo, as *LA PRESSE* recently claimed, comes down to creating a climate of security in order to enable Tunisians "to do better work and therefore produce more"?